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UNITARIANISM

THE

DOCTRINE OF THE GOSPEL.

A VIEW

OF THE

Scriptural Grounds of Unitarianism;

WITH AN

EXAMINATION

OF

ALL THE EXPRESSIONS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT WHICH ARE GENERALLY CONSIDERED AS SUPPORTING OPPOSITE DOCTRINES.

BY

LANT CARPENTER, LL.D.

The Third Edition, with Alterations.

That they may know THEE, THE ONLY TRUE GOD, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. *John* xvii. 3.

But now ye seek to kill me, a MAN, that hath told you the truth which I have heard from GOD. *John* viii. 40.

BRISTOL:

PRINTED AND SOLD BY PARSONS AND BROWNE.

SOLD ALSO BY LONGMAN, HURST, REES, ORME, BROWN, & GREEN; AND ROWLAND HUNTER, LONDON.

1823

NEW YORK
PUBLIC
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UNITARIANISM

THE

DOCTRINE OF THE GOSPEL.

CHAP. I.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

Requisites for any Doctrine to be received as Christian Doctrine.—Plain and obvious Sense of Scripture.—Person and Office of our Saviour.—Importance of his Sufferings and Death.—Factitious Obstacles to the Spread of Unitarianism.

THE New Testament contains a faithful record of inspired doctrine; or, in other words, of the revelation of the will of God, communicated to mankind by Jesus Christ, either directly or through his Apostles. This will be admitted by almost all of those who admit the divine origin of Christianity: and it necessarily follows, that no opinion, however true, is to be received as Christian doctrine, unless it can be directly proved, or clearly inferred, from the New Tes-

tament. On the other hand, to authorize the admission of any opinion as Christian doctrine, the following conditions are requisite: *first*, that the words on which the doctrine is founded, be contained in a book written by an Apostle, or by one who was a competent evidence as to the words which he relates as the words of Jesus or an Apostle;—*secondly*, that there be no reasonable ground for believing that the words in question did not really proceed from the writer of the book;—*thirdly*, that the words be the words of Jesus himself, or of one acting under his immediate authority and direction;—*fourthly*, that it should be sufficiently clear, that in using these words, our Lord (or the Apostle) used them in the sense affixed to them;—and *fifthly*, that the speaker was declaring a truth in order to reveal or sanction it.* For instance, (1) If it cannot be satisfactorily shown that the Epistle to the Hebrews was written by an Apostle, no opinion which depends for its authority on that book *alone*, ought to be admitted as Christian doctrine: (2) If any opinion rest for its authority solely upon the common reading of *Acts* xx. 28, 'the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood,' it is not Christian doctrine, because the true reading is, 'the church of the Lord,' &c.: (3) Agreeably to the third position, the assertion that Jesus

* The reader is requested to bear in mind, that this is said in reference to doctrines, not to precepts of duty.

being a man made himself God,* affords no adequate ground for admitting the hypothesis of two natures in the person of Jesus to be Christian docrine, because it was a mere assertion of the Jews, in justification of their malicious attack upon his life: (4) Agreeably to the fourth, *Rom.* ix. 5, affords, of itself, no authority for receiving as Christian doctrine, the position that Jesus is the Supreme God; and the words of our Lord, *John* viii. 58, afford, in no way, any proof that he was the being called in the Old Testament I AM: (5) And lastly, demoniacal possession, and the vulgar opinion respecting the motion of the sun round the earth, are not to be regarded as Christian doctrines, upon the ground that our Saviour uses language founded on the opinions of the age and country on those points.

The foregoing principles may all be comprised in one, *viz.* that *in order to authorize the admission of any doctrine as Christian doctrine, it must be shown to have been declared by Jesus, either immediately, or through his Apostles.* To this must be added, that in proportion to the antecedent improbability of such doctrine, must be the strength of the evidence that it was really taught by Jesus.

As these things lie at the foundation of our inquiries as to Christian doctrine, I beg leave

* *John* x. 23.—In the following verse our Lord shows that if he had made himself God, he should have been justified in so doing by the Scriptures.

farther to observe, 1. That if it could be shown, that the Apostles advanced any principles inconsistent with what was taught by Jesus himself, I should not regard those principles as of any authority, because I consider him as the Word, the Son of God, by whom all things relative to the Christian dispensation were done, who was the medium of all the extraordinary communications to the Apostles, and in the strictest sense their instructor: besides, I cannot conceive it possible, that the Supreme Being should make two inconsistent communications to His creatures. 2. Though I see no reason to believe, that all which the Apostles wrote, they wrote under the present influence of immediate communication from God; yet I cannot but deem it highly probable, that their minds were so fully and accurately impressed with the Gospel-scheme, as to preclude the danger of departing from its principles. Hence 3, in proportion as any doctrine is inconsistent with the words of Jesus, in so far it becomes improbable that it should have any real foundation in the words of the Apostles. 4. Where a doctrine not only *seems* to be inconsistent with reason, but can be *strictly proved* to be inconsistent with reason or matter of fact, it cannot be admitted as a doctrine of *divine revelation* by those who see the force of the argument; because it is impossible that the Supreme Being could reveal an absurdity or a falsehood.

One other observation it is desirable to pre-

mise. The opponents of Unitarianism say a great deal respecting the plain and obvious sense of Scripture. *We* are of opinion, that the plain and obvious sense of the words of Scripture, is *not* that which, from long habit, may have become familiar to the mind, and which, from its general diffusion, may now appear to be the simple and obvious sense even to the poor and unlearned,—but that in which they would be readily understood by those persons who, from native use, without any particular cultivation of mind, were conversant with the phraseology of the languages in which they were written, and who had, from the same cause, the turns of thought and habits of imagination that would enable them without hesitation to understand the force of expressions, which, when literally rendered into our language and referred to our modes of thinking and feeling, are either dark (if not incomprehensible,) or excite ideas widely different from the meaning of the author. And in order to ascertain this plain and obvious sense, in cases where there is ground for doubt, the only reasonable method is, to place ourselves as much as possible in the situations of the individuals for whose use the work was intended, to acquire an accurate acquaintance with their phraseology, with their habits of thinking, with the customs of the age, &c. I do certainly think that without all this, the grand practical truths of the Gospel may be understood by every serious thoughtful reader of the New Testament;

but I never can admit that, without it, the Scriptures can be fully understood, or their plain and obvious sense, in various cases, properly ascertained.

The foregoing observations, together with the rules of interpretation which will be found in Chap. IV., are the critical principles by which I wish ever to be guided, when examining the New Testament with a view to ascertain what are its doctrines; and it appears to me that they lead inevitably to the conclusion, that Unitarianism is the doctrine of the Gospel.

My belief as a Unitarian, as far as it respects the person and office of our Saviour, is, that God appointed the man Christ Jesus to declare to mankind His mind and will respecting their duty and expectations; in other words, to reveal the doctrine of free pardon and everlasting life, to point out the conditions by which these blessings are to be acquired, and to declare the consequences of impenitence and disobedience;—that to prove the divine authority of Jesus, God empowered him to work miracles, and in other ways manifested His sanction of that authority;—that in the execution of the all-important commission with which he was entrusted, Jesus voluntarily submitted to a painful and ignominious death, and thus completed his part in the Gospel-scheme of redemption, or deliverance from the power of sin and death;—that God raised him from the dead by His mighty power, as a proof of his divine authority, as a pledge to

his followers that they also should be raised from the grave, and as an assurance to all men that he has appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness by him;—and that God exalted him to great dignity and power, which power, during the age of the Apostles, was miraculously employed in diffusing the privileges and blessings of the Gospel.—In this statement I use the word *man* in the strict and usual sense, that in which I believe the Apostles also used it, *viz.* as denoting one who was, properly speaking, a human being, having no existence before his human birth.

The one great end and purpose of the work and sufferings, the miracles and resurrection of our Saviour, I believe to have been, 'that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.'* To accomplish this great end, three most important subordinate ends, or means, were accomplished; the mercy and forgiveness of God were *assured* to repentant sinners,† a state of retribution was *revealed*,‡ and the terms of pardon and everlasting happiness declared.§ I

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* *Titus* ii. 14. † *Luke* xxiv. 47.

‡ 2 *Tim.* i. 10. *John* v. 28, 29.

§ This view of the subject corresponds greatly with the sentiments of Dr. Priestley, as given in the *Theological Repository*, vol. i. p. 423, &c. The reader may see the passages quoted at large, in my *Examination of Bishop* (now Archbishop) *Magee's Charges*, p. 148—150. Dr. Priestley speaks of it as one great object of revelation, "to give us the most satisfactory assurance of the "pardon of our past sins upon our repentance and reformation, of "the certain acceptance of our sincere though imperfect endea-

do not think that the Scriptures teach any end of the mission and death of our Saviour, which is not included in these, or at least subservient to them. The essential importance of the sufferings and death of Christ, in the Gospel-scheme of redemption, arises entirely, in my apprehension, from their being *necessary* means to the accomplishment of one or more of those ends, though as far as respects our Saviour himself perfectly voluntary. It would be presumptuous in an erring mortal to say, that the Supreme Being could not have appointed some other means of effecting these purposes,—that he could not have set forth another mercy-seat, or that what he did set forth must have been sprinkled with blood;* but as we know from the event, that these means *were* appointed by God, and can perceive from the circumstances of the case that, *in those circumstances*, the assurance and extension of the blessings of the Gospel covenant *required* the sufferings and death of Jesus, there can be no hesitation in saying, that the sufferings and death of Jesus were *necessary* in order to fulfil the gracious purposes for which he came, and that therefore his death was a *necessary sacrifice* for the redemption of mankind, that is, for their deliverance from the power of sin and death.† This I believe to be the amount of the Gospel doctrine on this sub-

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"vours to do our duty, and of all necessary assistance in the practice "of it." * *Rom.* iii. 25.

† See this point more fully considered in Chap. VIII.

ject: and therefore, if any other supposed ends of the work and death of our Saviour be considered as the purpose of them,—such, for instance, as that he suffered and died in our stead in order to satisfy the justice of God, that his death propitiated or reconciled God to man, that his righteousness is imputed to us, &c.,—without inquiring whether or not these things are inconsistent with the known attributes of that great Being whom the risen Jesus styles his Father and our Father, his God and our God,* I feel no hesitation in asserting that they are not *Christian* doctrine.

There are several opinions respecting the nature or the death of Jesus Christ, which are all in direct opposition to Unitarian tenets on these points, and which the Unitarian must satisfy himself were not taught immediately or mediately by the Son of God, or he must doubt the truth of his own tenets, if not reject them altogether from the rank of Christian doctrine. And it is besause these opinions are so widely prevalent, and so strengthened by unchristian sanctions, (such as the supposed necessity of them to a participation in Gospel blessings, and the real necessity of them to a participation in many worldly advantages,) that Unitarianism is not readily and extensively embraced as the doctrine of the Scriptures. From the account of Luke in his invaluable narrative, it appears

* *John* xx. 17.

next to certain, that the first teachers of the Gospel, proposed for the belief of their converts nothing but Unitarianism;* and that consequently in the age of the Apostles it was easy to be a Unitarian, in so far as it was easy to become a Christian where there were no prejudices of Judaism, of Gentile philosophy, or of vice, to interfere. At present, as must be obvious to every one, it is *not* easy for a person to become a Unitarian; and I think the reason is, because men are not left to the simple teachings of the Scriptures. If a person seems likely to adopt Unitarian tenets, one informs him that they are totally inconsistent with the plain and obvious sense of the Scriptures; another, that it is impossible for a Unitarian to acquire true holiness of heart; a third, that the Unitarians deny the Lord that bought them; and a fourth, (joining in the dreadful denunciations of the Athanasian Creed, and expressing what the two latter only imply,) affirms, that they who reject the divinity of the Saviour, will without doubt perish ever-

* I do not mean to say that the first teachers of the Gospel often laid stress upon our Lord's being truly and properly one of the human race; but their preachings directly imply this, and contain nothing inconsistent with it. If the doctrine of two natures in the person of Christ, and of his divinity and pre-existence, were as much unknown now as I believe that they were in the times of the Apostles, Unitarians would not be obliged to make the *simple humanity* of Jesus, a part of their Creed. The whole of their system, like that of the Apostles, would imply it; but they would seldom be led to speak of Jesus as a man *only*.—It does not appear that the Apostles thought it necessary to assert that Jesus was really a man, (though they reasoned from the fact,) till the Gnostics and Docetæ taught that he was a man in appearance only.

lastingly.* It requires strong nerves, or strong convictions, for persons to withstand the influence of such assertions, before they are accustomed to consider their amount and *authority*. For myself, when I examine Acts x. 33—44, I feel convinced that I possess all the essentials of Christianity,† and that as far as faith is concerned I need not fear the disapprobation of my Judge; and the more I examine the Scriptures at large, the more satisfied I feel, that the convictions which I derived from a close and serious attention to them, accord with the truth as it is in Jesus.

It is I believe sometimes asked, if the Unitarian doctrine be so simple, and so accordant with the Scriptures, as its advocates maintain, why are they obliged to *labour* so much in order

* I wish that these were all the obstacles that are thrown in the way of the inquirer; but too often an appeal is made to worldly interest and honour, or to the influence of affection and friendship: and by the fear of the sacrifices to be made, if Unitarianism should be openly embraced, the progress of inquiry is stopped. Many, too, are prevented from examining into the evidence of popular doctrines, by the apprehension that the whole system may be found untenable. They feel as Bishop Smalridge did, when he said, "Mr. Whiston, I DARE NOT EXAMINE, I DARE NOT EXAMINE; for "if we should examine, and find that you are in the right, the "Church has then been in an error so many hundred years." (See Whiston's Historical Memoirs of Dr. Samuel Clarke, p. 142.) Surely there must be something wrong in a system which directly opposes the injunctions of the Apostles of Christ, 'Prove all things,' and, 'Try the spirits, whether they are of God.'

† Cornelius says (*v.* 33,) 'we are present before God, to hear *all* things which God hath commanded thee.' After Peter's speech to them, in which there is not one word respecting the divinity and vicarious punishment of our Lord, the holy spirit fell upon them, and they were all baptized. Now is it conceivable that Peter should not have declared to these Gentile converts the essentials of Gospel faith?

PART I.

GROUNDS FOR THE CONVICTION THAT UNITARIANISM IS THE DOCTRINE OF THE GOSPEL.

CHAP. II.

Evidences of each Book of the New Testament, respecting the Nature of our Saviour.

THE chief opinions respecting the nature of Jesus Christ, which oppose the Unitarian doctrine are the following, 1. That he is the only God ;—2. That he is the very and eternal God, of one substance, power, and eternity with the Father ;—3. That he is inferior to the Father, yet properly God, and the creator and governor of at least this world ;—4. That he existed before his human birth, but without any agency in the creation or government of the world. There are many shades of difference between these leading opinions; but these are the prominent differences, and the division is sufficiently accurate for my purpose.

It must, I should suppose, be admitted on all hands, that at the time when the books of the New Testament were written, all was known by

the Apostles which can now be known respecting the nature of our Saviour; and that no one of the writers of the New Testament could be ignorant of what was then known. Again, it appears to me equally clear, that the writers of the New Testament did not compose their respective books with reference to each other, so that *all* might *together* form one whole; but that each wrote what was requisite for his particular purpose, without reference to what might in future be written by others.* From these positions I infer as a natural consequence, that if either of the first three opinions above stated concerning the nature of Jesus, be accordant with the matter of fact, we may reasonably expect to find in every book in which he is expressly spoken of, sufficient reason to believe that the writer was acquainted with it and believed it. The circumstance must have been so astonishing in every point of view, that one who for more than thirty years was to all outward appearance a man, who experienced all the wants

* The Gospel of John seems to imply an acquaintance with one or more of the first three Gospels, or with the basis of them; and it appears to me very probable that the writer had in view, among other things, to supply deficiencies in the previous narrations, particularly with respect to those transactions which displayed the great criminality of the Jews in rejecting Jesus. That it was not his purpose to supply defects respecting the *nature* of Christ, I infer from his own statement in ch. xx. 31.—But though it is probable that John's Gospel would not have been written, if the other Evangelists had recorded the events and discourses which he relates, yet there is no room whatever to suppose, that any one of the other Evangelists was influenced in his silence as to the supposed superior nature of Christ, by the knowledge or expectation that John would supply his defects on that point.

and sufferings incident to human nature,—who, manifesting indeed the possession of divine powers, spoke of them as the gift of God, and while employing them lived with his disciples, and was regarded by his followers at large, as a man,—who, at last, though holy and innocent, after experiencing intense distress of mind and acute pain of body, died as a malefactor on the cross,—and who, though raised from the dead by the power of God, and exalted to power and great glory, before his ascension was occasionally with his apostles as a man with his fellow-men,* and for some time after was spoken of by them without any reference to the superiority of his nature,†—it must, I say, be so astonishing in every point of view, that this person should have been himself the supreme Jehovah,‡ or a being of one substance, power, and eternity with the Father, and himself the very and eternal God, or even the highest of created beings and the creator and governor of the world, that it appears to me next to impossible, that any to whom

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* *Luke* xxiv. *John* xxi.

† See *Acts* i. 21. ii. 22, 23, 36. iii. 13. v. 30. x. 38. xiii. 23, &c. &c.

‡ It is of great moment in this question that we consider what ideas the Jews must have entertained respecting the one-ness and unrivalled supremacy of Jehovah. In the Appendix No. II. the reader will find a brief view of the Evidence of the Old Tsstament. To me no truth can be more certain, than that the SERVANT OF JEHOVAH could not himself be JEHOVAH, and that JEHOVAH is the ONLY GOD. If this be admitted, then it is certain that Moses and the Prophets, (and consequently also the Jews in the time of Christ,) were believers in the fundamental principle of Unitarianism, that Jehovah, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, is God, and God alone, and the only proper object of religious worship.

this stupendous event had been communicated, could, after such communication, write or speak of him in terms which could lead their readers or hearers to suppose that they were ignorant of it, or even leave them in doubt whether they fully believed it. Now most competent judges agree, that the earliest of the Gospels was not written, in its present form at least, till A.D. 63 or 64, which is more than thirty years after the effusion of the Holy Spirit; that the book of Acts was not written till A.D. 63 or 64; and that the first written of the other books, *viz.* the first Epistle to the Thessalonians, was not written till A.D. 52.

In the foregoing paragraph, I have purposely omitted speaking of the fourth scheme, (that of simple pre-existence,) because I am sensible that owing to the adoption among the Pharisees of the doctrine of the pre-existence of men in general, the mere circumstance that Jesus existed before his human birth, would not be so astonishing or confounding to the imagination of a Jew, as the suppositions considered before. Still, as no one of the present advocates for this opinion connects it with an hypothesis so unfounded both in reason and revelation as the pre-existence of all men, but all of them maintain that the state in which Jesus existed before his human birth, was a state of glory and happiness far superior to what is enjoyed by any in the present world, —that in fact Jesus, before his human birth, was not a man but a being of superior nature to that

of man,—it seems to me that much of the weight which presses upon the former hypotheses, presses upon this of the simple pre-existence, as maintained by all who now maintain it, and as it ever will be, so long as the foundation for it is sought in the Scriptures.* According to this hypothesis, one who lived and died as a man, who did nothing that a man could not do if God were with him,† who taught nothing which man could not teach, if God communicated to him His will,‡ who, during his abode on earth, was regarded by his apostles and all his followers as a man, and was afterwards spoken of by them as a man,—was in reality a being of superior order, who had existed in a state of great glory and happiness, and was made man, in order to accomplish certain purposes which the advocates for this hypothesis must allow could at least as well have been answered by a proper human being, endowed with sufficient power by God, and sufficiently acquainted with his will respecting mankind. Now as this circumstance, if the matter of fact, must have been known to those who have recorded the words and actions of our Saviour before they committed their accounts to writing, it seems to me next to impossible, that three of them should have written respecting this illustrious super-human personage, not only

* Because some of the strongest passages in favour of the pre-existence, if they prove that point, prove also that the supposed prior existence was a state of great glory and happiness.

† *John* viii. 28. xiv. 10, 12. ‡ *John* xii. 49.

without in any way *declaring* his superiority in *nature* to other men, but so as to give no room for the inference that they *knew* of such superiority;—in fact just as we should expect persons of their age and country to write respecting one of whom they knew that he was 'a man from God pointed out by miracles and wonders and signs which God did by him,'* and 'declared to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead;'† and as to his *nature*, no more than this.

But let us consider the doctrine of the New Testament writers respecting the *nature* of our Saviour more in detail. In doing this, I shall not think it necessary to take any farther notice of the first hypothesis, (that he was himself the supreme God,) because it is held by very few; and as far as it is distinct from the Sabellian scheme, (which I consider as Unitarianism under a different name and using different language,) is opposed by every argument which opposes the second hypothesis, as well as by several in addition.

Evidence of MATTHEW, A.D. 64.

I. The Apostle MATTHEW has formed an account of the miracles and discourses of our Lord, from the time when he began his public preaching in Galilee, till his crucifixion. He has also recorded the baptism and temptation of Jesus, and some of the events succeeding his

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* *Acts* ii. 22. † *Rom.* i. 4.

resurrection. In the chapters preceding the account of the preaching of the Baptist, is a Narrative* of miraculous circumstances supposed to have preceded the birth of our Saviour, and of some subsequent occurrences. This Narrative is generally believed to have made a part of the original Gospel, and consequently to have been written by Matthew: I feel satisfied that it was not written by Matthew,† and consequently, that it is destitute of authority. But if the contrary

* Apparently entitled "The Account of the Birth of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham." See Introd. to Matt. ch. i. 1.

† These chapters "were wanting in the Ebionite copies of" Matthew's Gospel. Now "the Ebionites constituted a very large "proportion, if not the whole body, of the early Hebrew Christians: "who, whatever might be their opinion of other books in the N.T., "received the Gospel of Matthew as genuine, and could have had "no objection to the account of the miraculous conception of Jesus, "had it been found in their authentic copies. Also, as this narra-"tive contains the account of many extraordinary transactions, of "great publicity, which occurred in Judea at that time, it is abso-"lutely impossible that these Hebrew Christians should have been "ignorant of them, or have denied facts which redounded so much "to the credit of their Master and his religion. This narrative "therefore could not have been written by Matthew in that Gospel "which he composed for the instruction of the Hebrew converts." See B.'s masterly statements on this Introductory Narrative, in reply to the Quarterly Review of the Improved Version, inserted in the Monthly Repository for 1809, p. 415—423. See also Williams's Free Enquiry.

The Gospel of Matthew was written in the then language of the Jews, the Syro-Chaldaic. It appears to me probable, that the Greek translator, or some early transcriber of his translation, prefixed "The Account of the Birth of Jesus Christ," without any intention that it should be considered as a part of the Gospel. Before the middle of the second century, however, it came to be considered as a part of Matthew's Gospel; and thenceforwards was transcribed, translated, and quoted, as a part of it. Hence it is found in every MS. and Version now extant.

This Introductory Narrative contains, in the opinion of many who believe in the miraculous conception, more difficulties than all the N.T. besides: to myself it appears, that the writer's application of prophecy, and the inconsistency of his account with that of Luke, would make even less external evidence than we actually

were the fact, it would afford no evidence in opposition to Unitarianism. It informs us that the birth of Jesus was miraculous, but gives us no ground to suppose that the offspring of divine power was possessed of any nature different from human nature; on the contrary, what is said plainly implies, that Jesus first began to exist in consequence of that exertion of divine power.* We find from Matthew's own narrative, that Jesus presented himself at the baptism of repentance; and, though at first refused by the Baptist, (I imagine in consequence of the known purity and excellence of his character,)† that he actually submitted to it:—that after he had been declared to be the beloved Son of God,

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possess, a satisfactory ground for the conclusion, that it was not written by Matthew.

I regard the question almost entirely as a critical question: that it has no peculiar relation to Unitarianism, see the next note.

* The supposed miraculous conception of Jesus, is attended with what appear to me almost insuperable difficulties as far as the matter of fact is concerned; but how, if really the fact, it would prove any thing respecting the *nature* of Jesus, I cannot perceive. If it had pleased the Supreme Being to have at once formed Jesus with all his powers of body and mind precisely as they were at thirty year of age, the circumstance would have been at least as miraculous, as what is now supposed to have been the fact; yet would any one say that such a formation would have proved, or even implied, that Jesus possessed a nature superior to that of man? If so, then Adam was not strictly and properly a man. Besides, the birth of Isaac, of Samuel, and of the Baptist was miraculous; and will any one say that they too possessed a superior nature? These cases are not precisely parallel; but in all of them the miraculous agency of of divine power is the same. If the supposed miraculous circumstances of the birth of Jesus do not *of themselves* prove that he possessed a superior *nature*, the narratives of them (particularly that of Luke) plainly imply, that Jesus first began to exist when the agency of God caused his bodily life to begin.

† Chap. iii. 14.

he underwent temptations such as would naturally follow from the new circumstances in which he was placed:—that though he spoke and acted with a dignity and authority suited to his heavenly commission, yet he directed his disciples to pray to God and make him the object of their chief affections, without claiming any personal honour to himself, still less intimating that he was himself intitled to divine honour and worship:—that having in vain endeavoured to convince the Jews, by his miracles and instructions, that he was the promised Messiah, and that his kingdom was not of this world, he was crucified by them in circumstances of great suffering and ignominy:—that previous to his crucifixion, he underwent great distress of mind:—that he died and was buried:—that he rose again from the dead; appeared to his Apostles in Galilee; and gave them their final commission to spread his religion.

Throughout the whole of Matthew's Gospel, there is not a single passage which indicates that the Evangelist thought our Saviour to have possessed any nature superior to that of man. He records two expressions of our Lords,* which

* *Matt.* xi. 27. "All things have been delivered [or communicated] to me by my Father; and no one knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any one the Father, but the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son chooseth to reveal him."—On this passage I observe, 1. That since he to whom the Son reveals the Father, knows the Father, the expression can have no reference to the *nature* of God, which is incomprehensible by finite minds, nor to the *general* proceedings of his universal providence, which are also out of the reach of the human understanding fully to comprehend; and the connexion obviously points out, that 'knowing the Father,' means, knowing his purposes with respect to the mission of our

are usually understood as implying the possession of power and knowledge in a degree inconsistent with his simple humanity; and two others, which are supposed to imply a personal universal presence with his disciples.* The Apostle also records the baptismal form which is *now* commonly used;† and the author of the Introductory Narrative speaks of the application of the name *Emmanuel* to Jesus.‡ But it is probable that no advocate for the superior *nature* of Jesus

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Lord. 2. This determines the meaning of the expression knowing the Son; *viz.* knowing the full extent and purport of his mission, and shews that it has no reference to any supposed incomprehensibility of his *nature*. 3. The whole refers to the time then present. 4. Whatever knowledge of the divine purposes Jesus possessed, it was *communicated* to him by God; and he could communicate it to *others*.

Matt. xviii. 18. "All power [or authority] has been given me in heaven and on earth." The only difficulty here is as to the nature and extent of the authority; for whatever the authority was, it was *given* to Jesus, and he who gave it could also fit him for employing it.—Some remarks on the passage will be found in Chap. VI. § 3.

* *Matt.* xviii. 20. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.—Ch. xxviii. 20. And lo, I am with you always to the end of the age.

On these passages some remarks will be found in Ch. VI. § 3; I content myself here with observing, that whatsoever be the nature and duration of the presence here spoken of, the same power which raised him from the dead, which carried him from this earth, and rendered his body incorruptible (see *Rom.* vi. 9.) could doubtless communicate to him the properties on which such presence depends.

† The stress which is laid by many on the baptismal form as a proof of the Trinity, will oblige me to make some remarks upon it (see Ch. V.) To me it appears clear, that if this be as some say the chief support of the doctrine, it must soon fall, never to rise again.—If the baptismal form do not favour this doctrine, it obviously is no proof of a superior nature in Christ.

‡ If the name *Emmanuel* (God with us) imply that Jesus is God, then indeed there must be to us as to the heathen, 'gods many and lords many;' for many names in the Hebrew language imply at least as much as Emmanuel, such as *Elihu*, my God himself; *Eliah*, the Lord God, &c.

would deny, that if we had been possessed of this Gospel alone, the doctrine of his divinity,* or even of his pre-existence, could never have been received as *Christian* doctrine.

Evidence of MARK, A.D. 64.

II. Nearly the same observations may be made respecting the Gospel of MARK. This Evangelist, who was the relation and disciple of Peter, and who is usually thought to have compiled his narrative under the immediate direction of that Apostle, says not one word which indicates that he considered our Saviour as having a nature above that of man. He records one expression of our Lord which I regard as fatal to the Trinitarian scheme, though at *first view* it appears most favourable to the superiority of his nature to that of angels;† but this is in appearance only; and at most, as all will allow, if favourable to the latter opinion, it in no way proves the point.

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* I use this word throughout, in reference to the *nature* of Jesus Christ. I admit the divinity of his *mission*, of his *office* or *character*, of his *revelation;* I too should readily use the expression *divinity* of Jesus himself, (in reference to his being the representative of God, to his possessing the spirit beyond measure, &c.) were it not ambiguous in its import, and most commonly used in reference to a superior *nature* supposed to be possessed by Jesus. Against this supposition my objections rest.

† *Mark* xiii. 32. 'But of that day and hour knoweth no one (neither the angels that are in heaven, nor the Son,) except the Father.' It might more reasonably be expected that Jesus would have been informed of the exact time of the coming of the Son of man, than that any other being, however exalted in nature, should be made acquainted with it.

Evidence of LUKE, A.D. 63 or 64.

III. IT can scarcely be necessary to add, what every careful reader of the Gospel of LUKE must know, that it contains nothing from which alone it could be inferred that Jesus possessed a nature above human, or existed before his human birth.—If the usual interpretation of ch. i. 26—38, really give the meaning of the Evangelist, then he informs us that our Saviour's birth was owing to the miraculous agency of divine power;* but he also records circumstances which, if not totally inapplicable to a being possessed of a nature more than human, are at least most applicable to one who was strictly and properly speaking a human being: he says (ch. ii. 40) that 'the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit,' (the very words which he had employed respecting the Baptist,) 'filled with wisdom, and the grace (or favour) of God was upon him;' and in ch. ii. 52, he says, 'and Jesus increased in wisdom and stature and in favour with God and man.'—In different parts of his Gospel, he relates the effect of the miracles of Jesus upon the minds of the beholders;—they convinced the people that God

* The reader will find in Appendix I. my opinion respecting the genuineness of the introductory chapters of Luke's Gospel, and also respecting the real meaning of the passage which is supposed to teach the miraculous conception of our Lord. It cannot be too much borne in mind, that this last is a question having no peculiar relation to Unitarianism. That Jesus was not the son of Joseph, is an opinion which I reject, because I deem it inconsistent with the express declarations of the Scriptures, (that Jesus was the son of David,) and not required by the statements of Luke; but I never felt it in any degree affecting the doctrine of the simple humanity of our Lord.

was of a truth with him, but never led them to the inference that he was more than man.* He records some facts of high interest respecting the character and *humanity* of our Lord, which are not recorded by the other Evangelists;† but there is not, I believe, through the whole of his Gospel, above one passage which *appears* to indicate that he possessed a nature more than human; and the appearance merely arises from not distinguishing character or office from nature.‡

IV. It may now be convenient to attend a little to the other invaluable narrative of this Evangelist. In the *Acts*, St. Luke has given an account of the preaching of Christ among the Jews by Peter, of the extension of the gospel-covenant to the Gentiles, of the conversion of Paul, and of his preachings among the Gentiles, and before some eminent men, both Jews and Gentiles.—The British and Foreign Bible Society printed 2000 copies of a translation of John's Gospel into the Mohawk language.§ It may not unreasonably be supposed that the Mohawk Indians will for some time know nothing of the Scriptures but what they now possess; and that their views of Christianity will, in a great measure,|| be those

* See *Luke* v. 26. vii. 16. xvii. 15, &c. and *Matt.* ix. 8.
† Ch. vii. 36—50. xxii. 43, 44. xxiii. 34, 46, &c.
‡ Ch. x. 22. See the Note on *Matt.* xi. 27, p. 22.
§ See First Report, p. 16.
|| Not that I think that the Gospel of John, translated with tolerably accuracy, and left to make its own impression, would give persons of plain good sense a conviction of the divinity or pre-existence of Jesus, for cases have occurred to my knowledge proving

which are supposed by most persons to be taught by the Gospel of the beloved Apostle. Now suppose that, ten or twenty years hence, a sensible Mohawk were to become familiar with the English language, and to learn that there is, in the English Bible, an account of the first preaching of the Gospel among those who were not Christians, written by a companion of one of the chief Apostles:—let the common sense of the reader determine, whether he would not *reasonably* expect to find doctrines which he had been taught to consider as essential to salvation, (such as the deity of our Saviour, and the infinite merit of his atoning blood,) frequently and clearly declared by the Apostles? and let any one, who has carefully read the Acts, say if he would not be completely disappointed? I think that his first impression would be, that the writer of the Acts must have been some one of the Socinians, whom he might have heard reprobated as denying the essential truths of the Gospel; and that he would be apt to throw down the book in disgust. It is not perhaps too much to assert, that no modern defender of orthodoxy would think himself justifiable, were he preaching the Gospel to heathens (for instance to the Hindoos,) if he were as silent, as from Luke we learn that the first preachers of the Gospel were, concerning what are now generally regarded as the funda-

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the contrary; but that the Mohawks will probably have received the usual interpretations to assist them in understanding this Gospel.

mental truths of the Gospel. I wish I may be wrong; and that those who are so laudably labouring among the heathen nations may, in this respect as well as in zeal, follow the example of the Apostles.

However these things may be, I consider it as indisputable, from the narrative of Luke, that the sum and substance of the Apostles' preaching relative to doctrine, both to Jews and to Gentiles, was, that Jesus of Nazareth was the Son of God and the Christ, that God raised him from the dead, and appointed him to be the judge of all men, and that those who believe in him and turn from their sins, will receive forgiveness.* And I consider it as further indisputable, that there is nothing in the Acts which can justify the opinion that Luke knew of the supposed fact that our Saviour was 'the very and eternal God;'† or even that he pre-existed in a nature infinitely more excellent; or even that he existed at all before his human birth:‡ I think it also evident from his account, that such opinions either were not known, or at least not believed,

* It can hardly be necessary to mention, that it is next to certain that the common reading of *Acts* xx. 28, did not come from the pen of Luke, who wrote 'to feed the church of the Lord,' not 'to feed the church of God.'

† Second Article of the Church of England.

‡ Luke records an expression *Acts* ix. 14, 21. xxii. 16, which, as commonly translated and understood, implies that the disciples of Jesus paid religious worship to their Lord. The words in the first passage are thus rendered in the Public Version, 'And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all *that call on thy name;*' and in like manner in the other instances. In Chap VI. § 5, I hope to show that this rendering is unnecessary; and that, at any rate, the interpretation of the expression is unfounded.

by the Apostles Peter and Paul, after they had received the holy spirit; and though we have not the same positive evidence respecting the belief of John and the other Apostles, yet as they certainly knew of the preaching of Peter to the Jews, and did not add any thing thereto, I think I am authorized in concluding that they also had the same "scanty" creed with Peter and Paul.

My inference from these things is, that what the Apostles have said in their own writings cannot, in justice to Luke, be interpreted so as to speak a different language from that recorded in the Acts, if on comparing Scripture with Scripture it appear that their words can be justly interpreted agreeably thereto.

Now let us for a moment suppose, that the first three Gospels and the Acts had alone been preserved to us,—inestimable as the Gospel of John and other parts of the New Testament appear to us, will any one venture to assert that, without them, the fundamental truths of Christianity would have been unknown; and that Matthew and Mark and Luke have not said enough to enable the disciple of Jesus to possess the faith which sanctifieth and saveth? And yet this must be maintained, or the fundamental truths of the Gospel, and the faith required by the Gospel in order to enjoy its blessings, must be very different from what modern creeds, and modern evangelical preachers, teach them to be.

Evidence of PETER, A.D. 64.

V. AFTER examining the Acts, one is naturally led to turn to the Epistles of Peter and Paul, to ascertain whether their own statements accord with those of Luke respecting their preachings.

The *first Epistle* of PETER obviously contains nothing which implies more than what is contained in the words of the Apostle when addressing the Jews,* (*viz.* that Jesus was a man from God,) unless the very obscure passage in ch. iii. 18--20, be regarded as implying his pre-existence simply considered; that it does not I shall be led to shew in Chap VII. As to the deity of Jesus, still more as to his equality and consubstantiality with the Father, this Epistle affords us no room to suppose that the Apostle Peter knew any thing of them. He speaks of God, as 'the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ;'† he speaks of Jesus as committing himself to him that judgeth righteously,‡ and refers his readers to Christ as setting an example of *human* virtues, innocence, truth, and patience.

It is well known to every critic, that the evidence for the genuineness of the *second Epistle of Peter* is far from complete; and agreeably to the opinion of Lardner, this epistle should "not be alleged as affording alone sufficient proof of any doctrine:" there is however nothing in it in

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* *Acts* ii. 22. † 1 *Pet.* i. 3. ‡ Ch. ii. 23.

any way inconsistent with, or even additional to, the words of Peter before referred to.*

The silence of Peter respecting the personal divinity and pre-existence of our Saviour, and even the completely unqualified use of language which, in its plain and obvious sense, must lead to an opinion inconsistent with those doctrines, strikes me forcibly in this connexion. He had denied his Lord, and must have felt the greatest desire to serve his cause; he loved and reverenced him; he speaks of the glorious attestation of his claims which God enabled him to manifest and manifested in and by him.† If the second epistle were written by him, speaking of the transfiguration of our Lord, he says that then they 'were eye-witnesses of his majesty, for he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.'‡ Now is it conceivable, that this ardent Apostle should omit to mention the infinitely greater glory of his Lord, in being the very and eternal God, or even the Creator and Governor of this world? or can it be supposed that he would leave his hearers and readers

* I have taken no notice above of Mr. Sharp's rendering of 2 *Peter* i. 1, 'of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ,' because few, I imagine, lay any stress upon it. That as far as the Greek merely is concerned, it is a justifiable rendering, is admitted; that it is a necessary rendering is absolutely denied; and if not necessary, it is totally inadmissible till some unambiguous instance can be adduced of such phraseology.—The same remark will serve for the other renderings of Mr. Sharp. See Chap. V., and App. No. III.

† *Acts* ii. 22, 33. x. 38. ‡ 2 *Pet.* i. 16—18.

ignorant of the important, at least interesting, circumstance, that Jesus of Nazareth existed before he lived in this world, in a state of great glory and happiness? Would any present believer in those doctrines, if he had once denied his Master, feel such silence justifiable? I think not; and I think too that if Peter had known that his Lord possessed a nature superior to that of man, he would not have been silent respecting it. He ascribes praise and dominion to him,* and yet if the second and third opinions respecting Jesus, (*viz.* the Trinitarian and Arian systems,) be true, the Apostle omits to state, nay, does not once refer to, the strongest reasons for praise and even adoration.

Evidence of PAUL.

WE may now proceed to the writings of the Apostle PAUL. In perusing his Epistles with a view to the question before us, two things ought to be borne in mind; *first*, that Paul was not acquainted with our Saviour during his public ministry, and would therefore naturally dwell most upon the *subsequent* proofs of his divine authority, and upon his state of exaltation: *secondly*, that he had direct instructions from him; that our Lord was at least twice† personally present with Paul; and that probably he much more frequently, in some way or other,

* 1 *Pet.* iv. 11. 2 *Pet.* iii. 18.
† *Acts* xxvi. 15, 18. xxii. 17—21.

manifested his purposes to this Apostle. The latter remark will render it unnecessary to refer particularly to those passages which are found in the Epistles, in which the Apostle appears to be influenced by the belief, that his Master was acquainted with his transactions, and that he often directed and supported him in the difficulties and perplexities of his commission. Language founded on such peculiar communications, which the *Apostle* might use with respect to our Saviour, cannot with any propriety be now used by the Christian; unless indeed it can be shewn from the Scriptures, that the Lord Jesus still *personally* presides over and regulates the affairs of his church, and still in a secret manner *personally* influences the minds of his faithful disciples.

In giving a general view of the doctrine of the Apostle respecting the person of our Saviour, as we may derive it from his Epistles, I wish to take them in the order of time; and as the opinion of Lardner on this point seems to be most generally adopted, I shall follow his arrangement.

VI. The *first Epistle to the Thessalonians* (written in A.D. 52, about sixteen years after the conversion of the Apostle,) contains nothing respecting the nature of our Saviour, inconsistent with, or additional to, the Apostle's declaration, that the MAN Christ Jesus is the only mediator between God and men, (1 *Tim.* ii. 5.) He speaks of him as the Son of God, who died for our benefit and was raised by God.—The *second* Epistle

(A.D. 52,) is equally silent as to any superiority of the *nature* of Jesus over human nature.

VII. The *Epistle to the Galatians* (A.D. 52 or 53) was written in consequence of the successful efforts of some Judaizing teachers to persuade the Galatians to submit to the law of Moses. This, one would think, was a suitable opportunity for inculcating the deity of our Saviour, as a reason why the Galatians should return to their first faith; since a covenant of which one who was the very and eternal God, or at least above all created beings, was the mediator, might reasonably be presumed to be superior to one of which man only was the mediator:* at any rate, I can perceive no reason which should prevent the mention of, or reference to, such a striking circumstance, except what I consider as the fact, that the Apostle was not acquainted with it. He endeavours to convince the Galatians that the Christian dispensation is superior to, and supersedes the Jewish; but so far from intimating that the mediator of the former was superior in *nature* to the mediator of the latter, he expressly says,† that 'when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth‡ his Son,§ born of a woman,||

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* *Gal.* iii. 19. † Ch. iv. 4.

‡ Compare *John* xvii. 18. 'As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.'

§ That the appellation *Son of God* has nothing to do with *nature*, but refers to *character*, or *office*, see Chap VI. § 3. For the present I refer to *Rom.* viii. 14. 'For as many as are led by *the* spirit of God, they are sons of God;' and to 1 *John* v. 1. 'Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God.'

|| "The phrase, 'born of a woman,' bears no allusion to the sup-

born under the law' (*i.e.* himself subject to the law of Moses,) 'to redeem those that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.'*—There is, indeed, one passage which may by some be thought to indicate that Jesus Christ was a super-angelic being;† but however much it might suit such an opinion, it in no way whatever implies it, nor has it any thing to do with the *nature* but merely with the *office* of our Lord. And I find it has been inferred from the first verse of the Epistle,‡ that Jesus possessed a nature superior to that of man; but if the passage prove any thing against Unitarianism, it proves too much, *viz.* that Jesus was not a man;

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posed miraculous conception of Christ. It is a common Jewish phrase to express a proper human being. See *Job* xiv. 1. xv. 14. xxv. 4. *Matt.* xi. 11. *Luke* vii. 28." Note in the Improved Version—I certainly think that the expression means 'a proper human being;' and that it is well illustrated by the passages referred to; but the phraseology in the original is somewhat different. In this passage it is γενομενον εκ γυναικος, in the other passages it is γεννητος γυναικος. That Paul uses γενομενος in the sense here given, see *Rom.* i. 3.

* The Apostle obviously lays some stress upon the circumstance, that he who was to redeem those who were subject to the law, should not only be a human being, but also be himself subject to the law. Compare with this the reasoning of the Writer to the Hebrews, ch. ii. 16, 17, and the remarks made in this Chapter on that Epistle.

† *Gal.* iv. 14. 'But ye received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus;' or 'but received me as a messenger of God, as Christ Jesus.'

‡ 'Paul, an Apostle, not of men, nor by men, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father who raised him from the dead.'—"The Apostle's distinction here is not between a man and a being of a superior order, but between men now living in the world, and who were themselves servants and messengers of Christ, and Jesus Christ himself, who had been raised from the dead and exalted to be the head and governor of the church." See Note in the Improved Version. —"Here observe," says Dr. Priestley, "Jesus Christ is distinguished from God to whom he was subordinate, and by whose power, and not his own, he was raised from the dead."

and I should imagine that few would show the weakness of their cause, by adducing such passages.

VIII. The *first Epistle to the Corinthians* (A.D. 56,) contains no information respecting the *nature* of our Saviour in addition to what has been already stated. It is true the Apostle tells his converts,* that he had not fed them and could not then feed them with meat, since they were not able to bear it; from which it might be inferred that he had kept and still kept the more mysterious *doctrines* of the Gospel from them: but if this inference suited the context, (which it does not,) it would also require us to admit, that these doctrines could not be essential to sanctification and redemption.†—The fact is, that if we take words in the plain obvious sense, we cannot learn from this Epistle that Jesus was the very and eternal God, or even (by direct inference) that he possessed a nature superior to that of man. The Apostle, if he had foreseen the additions which have been made to the 'simplicity that is in Christ,'‡ could not have more effectually guarded against one of the most striking of them, (the doctrine of trinity in unity, that *in unity of the Godhead there are three persons of one substance, power, and eternity*,) than he has in this Epistle by the following words; '*to us there is* ONE GOD *the* FATHER, *from whom*

* 1 *Cor.* iii. 2.
‡ 2 *Cor.* xi. 3.
† See 1 *Cor.* i. 2, 30. iii. 16, 23, &c.

*are all things and we to him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and we through him.'** Convinced as I am that the Christian church at this period was strictly Unitarian, I do not expect to see direct declarations of the proper humanity of our Saviour;† and I expect it less in the writings of Paul than of any other, because he knew the Lord only in his glorified state, and was, from the nature of his writings, led principally to speak of him in that state: yet it is obvious that the Apostle frequently speaks of him as a man; and as in the Epistle to the Galatians (as above noticed) he lays a stress

* Ch. viii. 6. If the first τα παντα (all things) be not more extensive than the second, and we may be allowed to interpret the latter by various other passages of Scripture, (see the Note on *John* i. 3.) the meaning of the passage probably is: 'To us Christians, there is but one God, our Father, from whom all our christian blessings proceed, and to whom we offer up our worship; and one Lord, even Jesus Christ, through whom all these blessings have been communicated, and through whom we have access unto the Father.' The passage is so elliptical that its particular import is somewhat obscure; but nothing can be clearer than its general import, which, if words have any meaning, completely refutes the idea that Jesus Christ is "the very and eternal God," "of one substance, power, and eternity with the Father."

† It may be said in reply, that the deficiency of direct declarations respecting the divine nature of our Saviour, arose from the doctrine of his simple humanity being then unknown. If any lay a stress upon this argument, let them prove that the belief in a superior nature was universal among the apostolical converts; let them also shew whence it was derived; and let them remember, that if such superior nature were not taught by the Apostles, (and if it were, the silence of Luke is unaccountable,) the belief of their converts must have been strictly Unitarian.—It is not sufficiently attended to by the opponents of Unitarianism, that one who lived and died as a man, would not be supposed, by any Jew at least, to be truly and properly God, or even to be possessed of a superior nature, if the fact were not taught by proper authority. If it were not taught, the belief of the apostolical converts would, as a matter of course, contain nothing inconsistent with the simple humanity of Jesus;—in other words, they would be Unitarians.

upon his being in the same circumstances with those whom he came to redeem from the law, so in this Epistle he lays a peculiar stress upon his being man, in connexion with the doctrine of a resurrection; 'for since by man came death, by man cometh also the resurrection from the dead.'* The Apostle farther speaks (ch. ix. 5.) of the *Brethren* of the Lord, (*i.e.* according to the opponents of Unitarianism, of one who was the very and eternal God, or, of the highest of created beings himself God and the Creator of the world;) and he says that he died, was buried, and rose again.† It seems to me almost incredible that the Apostle should thus unguardedly write, if he believed him to be "God-Man," or "the I AM," &c.—But I must not omit to observe, that there are three passages which are thought at least to *imply* the pre-existence of our Saviour, and one passage which *may* refer to divine worship being paid to him by the first converts. It is said that the Apostle calls him

* 1 *Cor.* xv. 21. I cannot see any force in the argument of the Apostle, in *v.* 12—21, if Jesus were not a proper human being, as to nature in all respects like his brethren. Paul maintains that the resurrection of the dead was not impossible (as some of the Corinthians appear to have asserted) because Christ had been raised from the dead: and in *v.* 12, 15, 16, he argues, that if the resurrection of the dead be impossible, then Christ could not have been raised from the dead. Now to infer from the impossibility of the resurrection of dead *men*, that a *God-man*, or a *super-human* being could not be raised up, would, as far as I can judge, be totally inconclusive. —I employ that strange, unscriptural compound, *God-man*, not with a view to throw ridicule on our opponents; but because it is frequently employed by them, and is very expressive of their sentiments. I think the Apostles would have used a similar appellation, if their belief had authorized it.

† 1 *Cor.* xv. 3, 4.

'the Lord from heaven;'* that he declares that the spiritual rock which followed the Israelites was the Christ;† that he warns the Christians not to tempt the Christ, as some of them (the Israelites) tempted *him*, and was destroyed by serpents;‡ and that he speaks of the Christians as calling upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.§ I do not hesitate to affirm, that however much these passages may suit a preconceived hypothesis, they afford *no* proof of the doctrine of a superior nature; and that they are in no way whatever inconsistent with the proper or simple humanity of our Saviour. To prevent repetition, I refer for the proof of this assertion to Chap. IV. and V. § 5. in which I shall consider these passages.

IX. The *first Epistle to Timothy* (A.D. 56,)|| contains the Apostle's instructions to his son in the faith; and, if Jesus Christ be spoken of, it is reasonable to expect that here also his superiority in *nature* to man would certainly be mentioned. Yet the truth is, that (with the exception of the noted passage, "God was manifest in the flesh,"¶ which almost indisputably was not written by the Apostle as it now stands,) this Epistle in no way countenances the idea of such superiority; and it contains one passage which manifestly implies the contrary, and than which nothing more explicit could have been

* 1 *Cor.* xv. 47. † Ch. x. 4. ‡ Ch. x. 9. § Ch. i. 2.
|| I prefer the later date assigned to this Epistle, *viz.* the close of A.D. 63. ¶ 1 *Tim.* iii. 16.

written, unless doctrines inconsistent with the proper unity of God, and the proper humanity of Christ, had already been taught, *viz.* '*For there is* ONE GOD, *and one mediator between God and man, the* MAN *Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all.*'* The Apostle has also a noble doxology, in which, as really written by him,† the unity of the Deity is asserted in so express and unqualified a manner, that, taken in connexion with the passage already mentioned, it appears to me to *demonstrate* that the Apostle Paul was not acquainted with the doctrine of the Trinity, or of the proper Deity of our Saviour, or, if he were, did not believe either: —'*Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the* ONLY GOD, *be honour and glory, for ever and ever. Amen.*

X. The *Epistle to Titus* was written near the same time with the preceding; and, as most persons will admit, contains nothing which tends to weaken the proof just spoken of: but as some of the advocates for the deity of Christ, seem disposed to adopt the singular rendering of ch. ii. 13, revived by Mr. Sharp,‡ I shall be obliged to notice that rendering in my second Part, (see Chap V.); and I shall here content myself with remarking, that to suppose the Apostle Paul to have called Jesus Christ "our great God and

* 1 *Tim.* ii. 5.

† Ch. i. 17. σοφῷ *wise* is left out of the text by Griesbach, upon authority which must satisfy every critic.

‡ "Of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ."

Saviour," when he had a short time before declared that there was *one* God, (before, the *only* God,) to the exclusion of the *man* Jesus Christ, is to do common sense and the Apostle more injustice, than to suppose that he did not minutely conform to a grammatical canon in a case where no ambiguity could result from the neglect of it.

XI. The next in Lardner's order is the *Second Epistle to the Corinthians* (A.D. 57.) At the beginning of this Epistle the Apostle uses the expression 'the GOD and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.'* In various parts of this Epistle he speaks of God and Christ, without the least intimation that they are one and the same being; and even in a manner which proves that he regarded them as two separate beings; and that he did not consider Christ as God, in the same sense at least in which he used the term in reference to the Supreme Being. He says that Christ is 'the image of God,'† and it cannot therefore be supposed that Paul considered him as God himself. He speaks of the sufferings of Christ,‡ and says that God raised up the Lord Jesus:§ and there is nothing in the Epistle which, of itself, would prove that the Apostle regarded Jesus as a being of a superior *nature* to that of man;

* 2 *Cor.* i. 3. also xi. 31.

† Ch. iv. 4. 'Lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine upon them.'—Compare *v.* 6, from which it is evident in what sense Jesus was the image of God; *viz.* that by him the gracious purposes of God were made known. Thus he was to us the representative of the Most High.—In 1 *Cor.* xi. 7, man is said to be the image and glory of God.

‡ Ch. i. 5. § Ch. iv. 14.

once have proved the superiority of the new dispensation; and would almost have made farther argument needless. How different is the plan pursued by the Apostle. So far from stating any such necessity, he says in the most unqualified manner, 'For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one MAN Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.'* Is it conceivable that the Apostle should have written thus, if he knew that Jesus Christ was in reality a being of superior nature? At any rate I think it clear, that it is the *Man* Jesus Christ by whom we have received the reconciliation, and that it is as *man*, (and as *man* only, whatever other nature were united with his human nature,) that he was our Saviour. It was the *Man* Jesus Christ who was the 'mercy-seat sprinkled with his own blood;' it was the *Man* Jesus Christ 'who was delivered up for our offences and was raised again for our justification;' it was the *Man* Jesus Christ by whose obedience many will be made just.†—But notwithstanding the complete silence of the Apostle where the explicit statement of our Saviour's superiority in *nature* might justly be expected, and his unqualified use of language in the plain and obvious sense inconsistent with it, yet in two passages in this very Epistle he is considered as intimating that our Saviour possessed a superior nature;‡ and in another pas-

* *Rom.* iii. 22. † Ch. v. 19. ‡ Ch. i. 3. viii. 3. ix. 5.

sage as asserting that he is 'God over all blessed for ever.' I admit that the last passage is capable of the common rendering; and that *if it could be shown* that Paul regarded Jesus Christ as 'the very and eternal God,' that rendering might be to be preferred: but as the passage is also equally capable of another rendering,* perfectly consistent (while the other is inconsistent) with the express assertions of the Apostle, that there is *one* God, whom he also styles the *only* God, and in this very Epistle the *only wise God*,† the *God* and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,‡ I can feel no hesitation to which of the two to give the preference. As to the other passages, they can prove so little, that I imagine few lay a stress upon them: however, I shall notice them in Chap. VII.

My examination of the books of the New Testament thus separately from each other, is extending beyond my expectations; however it may assist to show, that Unitarians do not take up their opinions lightly, and that they are not afraid of scriptural evidence, but wish to form their faith upon it; and as I consider it as attended with some other more important advantages, I shall proceed.

XIII. In the first chapter of the *Epistle to the*

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* 'God who is over all *be* blessed for ever.' See Chap. V.

† Ch. xvi. 27, 'to the ONLY WISE GOD be glory *through Jesus Christ*, for ever, Amen.' May we not justly say, that, if words have any force, Jesus Christ, *through* whom glory is ascribed, cannot be the only wise God, *to* whom glory is ascribed? and if he cannot, what becomes of the doctrine of the Trinity?

‡ Ch. xv. 6.

Ephesians (A.D. 61,) the Apostle describes, in elevated language, the state of exaltation in which 'the GOD of our Lord Jesus Christ'* hath, by His mighty power, placed him, after having thereby raised him from the dead†. That the passage has no reference to a pre-existent state, is perfectly clear; and to me equally so, that it has no reference to any superiority in *nature* supposed to be possessed by Jesus Christ. The Apostle had now nearly finished his course; he had seen the most important changes take place in the prospects, and in the character, of vast numbers of those who once were dead in trespasses and sins, and lived without God in the world; he had seen them created, through Christ Jesus, to good works, and blessed with every spiritual blessing through Christ: and having thus witnessed the glory and sovereignty of his exalted Lord, he speaks of them in animated and impressive language. As his expressions are somewhat figurative, many, through inattention to that circumstance, have inferred that our Saviour was a being of superior nature: for myself, I cannot discover one expression in the Epistle which is in any way inconsistent with the belief, that he who was thus *exalted* was the Man Christ Jesus: and it seems to me self-evident that the opinion that he was the very and eternal God, of like substance, *power*, and eternity with the Father, is completely inconsistent with the declaration of the Apostle‡, that 'the God of our

* *Eph.* i. 17. † Ch. i. 19—23 ‡ Ch. i. 17. 22.

Lord Jesus Christ' 'put all things under his feet and appointed him head over all things for the church.*'

XIV. The *second Epistle to Timothy* (A.D. 61,)† has by some one been called the last legacy of the Apostle to his beloved son. We found in the first Epistle no reference to a superior nature in Jesus Christ, but decisive expressions in support of the proper unity of God and the proper humanity of Jesus. In this Epistle, there is the same profound silence as to the supposed superiority of our Saviour in *nature;* and the same unqualified use of words in their plain and obvious sense inconsistent with it; 'Remember,' says the Apostle,‡ as

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* For a moment admitting the doctrine of the two natures, I ask which was *exalted* to this power; if the divine nature, then all equality is lost at once; if the human nature, then it is admitted that the *Man* Jesus Christ could have dominion over all things, and that the passages which refer to that communicated dominion have nothing to do with the *nature* of Jesus; if both together, the first difficulty remains as before.

† The opinion of those who suppose this Epistle to have been written in Paul's *second* imprisonment at Rome (*viz.* about the middle of A.D. 64,) appears to me preferable.

‡ Ch. ii. 8. *Μνημονευε Ιησουν Χριστον εγηγερμενον εκ νεκρων εκ σπερματος Δαβιδ κατα το ευαγγελιον μου.* The natural rendering of this passage surely is 'Remember that Jesus Christ, who was raised from the dead, *was* of the race of David.' If, as is not improbable, some had now begun to adopt the opinion, that Christ was a man in appearance only, these words may allude to their opinion: but it appears to me more probable, that they allude to the opinion of those who, maintaining that our Lord was not really the son of Joseph, denied, in effect, that he was of the race of David. If the late date of the Epistle be correct, this last opinion might already have been derived from Luke's Gospel, by some Gentile Christians, owing to their misunderstanding the force of Jewish phraseology: and if the early date be preferred, the same misunderstanding might have arisen, as to the import of those documents from which Luke derived the narrative contained in the first two chapters of his Gospel.—If those who maintain the miraculous conception, cannot show that Jesus was, nothwithstanding, of the seed of David, the Apostle's

generally understood, 'that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel.' Whence this silence of the Apostle, but from his ignorance of those doctrines, which are now regarded by many as the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel?

XV. The *Epistle to the Philippians* (A.D. 62,) contains nothing which is even apparently inconsistent with the simple or proper humanity of Christ, if we except the noted passage respecting his humility. That this passage is capable of a just and consistent rendering which is accordant with the Unitarian opinions on this point, I shall show in my next Part (see Chap. VI. § 3); and I shall here only add, that the common interpretation is inconsistent with the declaration of the Apostle so often spoken of, that there is but one God, and one Mediator, the Man Christ Jesus;—and that the opinion of the Church of England respecting our Saviour, is so far from being countenanced by this Epistle, that, throughout the whole of it, God the Father, and Jesus Christ, are spoken of in a way which precludes the possibility of their being, in the Apostle's opinion, one God. The Apostle expressly asserts, that 'God hath very highly exalted him,' 'that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.' (Ch. ii. 9. 11.)

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words, here and elsewhere, are decidedly against them: to myself the two opinions appear absolutely contradictory.

XVI. The *Epistle to the Colossians* (A.D. 62,) very much resembles that to the Ephesians in language and in plan; and most of the general remarks already made respecting the latter, are applicable also to the former. Throughout the whole, God the Father, and Jesus Christ, are spoken of, as in the last mentioned Epistle, so as to preclude the possibility of its being the Apostle's opinion, that they are one God. The agency of our Saviour in the Gospel scheme of redemption, or in the moral creation, is spoken of in highly figurative language; but the mode of expression is so widely different from that adopted when the creation of the world is spoken of, that there would be no ground for confounding the one with the other, even if the Scriptures were less express in referring the natural creation to the immediate agency of God himself. The Apostle in this Epistle* employs, together, the most strikihg expressions which he had before employed in different parts of his Epistles; and they give us an impressive view of his ideas respecting the vast importance of the Gospel scheme, and the high dignity to which Jesus was appointed in being made the agent of it, and the medium of its blessings: but in my opinion, (the grounds of which I shall show in my next Part,)† these expressions are in no way inconsistent with the belief, that Jesus was a man, who was made to his fellow men the medium of incalcula-

* *Col.* i. 15—19. See also ii. 9. † See Chap. VI. § 2, 3.

ble blessings, and exalted, after his exertions and sufferings for their welfare, to a state of great dignity, in which he was appointed to be the agent of those extraordinary interpositions of divine power by which, during the first period of the Christian church, the doctrines of the Gospel were confirmed, and its renovating and sanctifying influences most widely and rapidly extended among those who before were in the power of darkness.

XVII. The *Epistle to Philemon* (A.D. 62,) is silent respecting the supposed superiority of our Saviour in *nature;* but I infer nothing from this silence, as the letter is to a private individual, for a purpose not connected with the doctrines of the Gospel.

Evidence of the AUTHOR OF THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS, (A.D. 66.)

XVIII. BY whomsoever the *Epistle to the Hebrews* was written, it was very early known in the Christian church; and though from the deficiency of evidence in favour of its having been written by an *Apostle,** it cannot be regarded as by itself authoritative, yet it serves as a testimony relative to the opinion of the Jewish believers at the time it was written. The doctrine of the cross obviously continued to be a stumbling-block among the Jews; and they appear to have regarded the humiliation of the

* See Appendix, No. IV.

Mediator of the new covenant, as an indication of its inferiority to the old covenant. To show the superiority of the Christian over the Jewish dispensation, is the object of the Author. He begins with language in many respects resembling that of the Apostle Paul in some parts of his undisputed writings, maintaining the high dignity of our Saviour, the divinity of the character sustained by him, and his superiority to former messengers, in consequence of that character; but in my apprehension nothing more. From the abruptness of the Author's manner, and the present prevalence of Trinitarian sentiments, it is supposed by many, that he explicitly asserts that the Son created the universe and possessed immutability of nature; and it is very generally believed that he speaks of Jesus Christ in terms inconsistent with the idea of his simple humanity. The passage I must leave for examination in my next Part;* and I shall here only state respecting it, that the Author speaks of his superior holiness, as the reason why God gave him so exalted and dignified a commission;† and that he most expressly discriminates between him who declared the salvation, and God who bore witness to the testimony of the Apostles by his miraculous interferences.‡—After this introduction, which was well calculated to secure the attention of Jewish readers, and impress them with a sense of the high dig-

* See Chap. VI. § 2, 3. † *Heb.* i. 9. ‡ *Heb.* ii. 3, 4.

nity of the Son, the Author proceeds to show, *that it was requisite for the Saviour of men, to be himself a man, in all things like his brethren;** and his assertions on this point are so strong, that if we were certain that they possessed apostolical authority, nothing but equally express assertions that he was *not* in all things like his brethren, but was possessed of a nature superior, nay infinitely superior to theirs, could in any degree justify the language which is used by those who maintain "that two whole and perfect natures, that is to say, the Godhead and Manhood, were joined together in one Person, never to be divided, whereof is one Christ, very God and very man, who truly suffered, &c."† I look in vain for this doctrine in the Scriptures; and I believe that most others would too, if they had never learnt it from human Creeds and Articles.‡

* *Heb.* ii. 9—18. iv. 14. v. 10. The expression in ch. ii. 14—18, is remarkable. 'Since then the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also in like manner partook of the same; that through death he might destroy him who hath the power of death (that is, the devil;) and might deliver those who, through fear of death, were all their life-time subject to bondage. For verily he helpeth not angels, but he helpeth the seed of Abraham; *wherefore it behoved him to be like his brethren in all things*, that he might be a compassionate and faithful high-priest in things relating to God to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour those that are tempted.' See Impr. Vers.—This is Archbishop Newcome's rendering, except in the part in italics, where he has "to be made like:" the original is ὁμοιωθῆναι.

† Article II.

‡ In the subsequent part of the Epistle, we find some obscure passages, which have by many been supposed to refer to the pre-existence or superior nature of Jesus; but as they admit of a just interpretation, in perfect consistence with the Writer's own assertions, I feel no doubt to which to give the preference. These I shall notice in my next Part; (see Chap. VII.)

I have taken the books of the New Testament in the order which seemed most natural for my examination; and as two only remain besides the writings of the Apostle John, I shall consider the evidence afforded by them as to the supposed superiority of our Lord's nature, before I proceed to ascertain whether any information on this point is afforded by that Apostle, which, if *his* writings had not been preserved, would not have been known to the Christian church, or at most would have been derived from remote and obscure inference.

Evidence of JAMES, *about* A.D. 62.

XIX. THE *Epistle of* JAMES cannot reasonably be expected to give much information on the point before us; as its object is almost solely practical.* But though, from the purport of the Epistle, I should expect no explicit avowal of the Apostle's belief in the supposed superiority of our Saviour in nature to what he, with the rest of the Apostles, indisputably *once* believed, yet I can scarcely conceive it to be possible, that one who was the nephew of our Lord's mother, and who after our Lord's resurrection was spoken of as the Lord's brother, and who must have therefore been peculiarly accustomed

* The supposed opposition between the views of faith given in this Epistle and those given in the Epistles of Paul, seems to have been the chief cause of the doubts which were early entertained of its genuineness; and the evidence for its having been written by James the Younger, though not complete, is far from being unsatisfactory.

to think of Jesus as man, should content himself with calling him the Lord Jesus Christ, or even the Lord of glory (if that be the true translation of ch. ii. 1*), if he really believed that he was the very and eternal God, or even the Creator of all things, himself God.

Surely these men must have had minds very differently constructed from ordinary minds, to have allowed such astonishing knowledge to be totally unemployed on any occasion suitable for the manifestation of it. Not only are we incapable of fixing upon a time when they first acquired it, but even after it must be supposed that they already had acquired it, or that they never did acquire it, we perceive no difference in their language respecting their glorified Lord, except what necessarily arose from the state of exaltation to which he had been raised. We can fix upon the time when the Jewish prejudices of the Apostles were removed, when they were taught the grand mystery of the Gospel—that the new covenant belonged equally to the Gentiles; is it conceivable, is it possible, that the infinitely greater mystery, that he with whom they had been accustomed to live in habits of friendly though respectful intimacy, and whom they had treated in all respects as a human being,

* The original is *την πιστιν του κυριου ἡμων Ιησου Χριστου της δοξης*: The last word may refer either to *πιστιν* or to *κυριου*. Wakefield refers it to the former, 'glorious belief;' if it be referred to the latter, the clause should probably be rendered, agreeably to the Hebrew idiom, 'the faith of our glorious Lord Jesus Christ.' *See* Chap. VI. § 3.

was in reality the eternal and omnipresent God, —that this should, when revealed to them, have excited no surprise, should have made no æra in their proceedings, should have produced no change in their language? Till these things are clearly explained, I must maintain that the plain and obvious sense of Scripture is most decidedly against the orthodox doctrines on this point; and that if any person of common understanding, uninstructed in human creeds and articles, were to sit down to form his opinions from the Scriptures alone, he never could derive, even from the common translation of them, that incomprehensible doctrine which is sometimes called the *Christian* doctrine of Trinity in Unity.

Evidence of JUDE.

XX. THE *Epistle of* JUDE is ascribed to Judas, the brother of James the Younger. If I were not aware that the evidence for the genuineness of this Epistle is very incomplete, I should maintain that of itself it contains abundant proof that the doctrine of a "Tri-une Deity," "three persons and one God," is totally unscriptural. At any rate, it may be considered as an evidence of the faith of the Christian church where and when it was written. Passing by the 4th verse,*

* Griesbach's text is, *και τον μονον δεσποτην και κυριον ἡμων Ιησουν Χριστον αρνουμενοι.* The Received Text has *Θεον* after *δεσποτην*; and Mr. Sharp, I believe, renders it, 'Denying our only Master, God, and Lord, Jesus Christ.' That this rendering is unscriptural, has been shown in the excellent little pamphlet of the Rev. Calvin Winstanley, entitled 'A Vindication of Certain Passages

which has lately been made to speak a language which I am satisfied the Writer never intended, at the conclusion of his Epistle he says,* 'to the ONLY GOD, our Saviour, *through Jesus Christ our Lord*, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and for ever. *Amen.*'

Recapitulation of the Evidence of MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE, PETER, PAUL, JAMES, *and* JUDE.

I HAVE now briefly stated what I believe to be a just view of the evidence of all the writers of the New Testament, except the Apostle John; and I feel no hesitation in asserting, that no one of them in any way *teaches* the proper Deity of the Son of God, still less that he is, "the very and eternal God," "of one substance, power, and eternity with the Father;"—that the *general tenor* of their writings is *entirely inconsistent* with those positions;—and that some *passages* are in *direct opposition* to them. With respect to the lower schemes which reject the simple or proper

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in the common English Version of the New Testament;' (1805.) Mr. W. clearly shows, that Mr. Sharp's renderings are unnecessary as well as unscriptural. I have not heard that any notice has been taken of his arguments; but Mr. Sharp's learned supporter, Dr. Middleton, would have done well to refute them, before he ventured some of his unfounded and unjustifiable censures upon Gregory Blunt. The last mentioned writer has not discussed the subject in the manner which one would wish; but his learning, and his keen sense, are indisputable, and should have preserved him from the sarcasm and superciliousness of Dr. Middleton.

* The Received Text has, 'to the only wise God, our Saviour, be glory and majesty,' &c. Griesbach rejects "wise," upon abundant authority; and upon at least equal authority, inserts, 'through Jesus Christ our Lord,' as above, though he only prefixes to these words the mark of probable insertion.

humanity of our Saviour, I feel authorized by my examination to maintain, that though a few passages occur, which, if those schemes were *previously proved* to be scriptural, would countenance them, yet they admit of a just interpretation much more conformable to the general tenor of those writings, and most strongly supported by express assertions in other parts of them; and that the evidence derived from those writings, is therefore totally inadequate to prove doctrines which, to say the least, are not consistent with the plain and obvious sense of the words of the Writers, in various parts:—and since it is inconceivable that they would leave a point so striking, and, as most will admit, so momentous, as our Lord's superiority in nature, to be derived by inference merely, from a small number of passages which correctly admit of a different construction, and in some cases require it if we consider their connexion, I am justified in asserting that those Apostles and Evangelists do not teach such superiority of nature; and that therefore, from their evidence alone, there would be no sufficient reason to receive this doctrine as Christian doctrine. And farther, since in those writings there is nothing, which when interpreted by the connexion and by other passages of the same writer, is in any way inconsistent with the belief, that Jesus, the Son of God, was strictly and properly speaking a man, who was appointed by God to execute a purpose of the utmost importance to the welfare

of mankind, who was endowed by God with all necessary supplies of knowledge and power, and who was raised from the dead by God, and exalted by Him to be the dispenser of all those extraordinary powers, by which the blessed influences of the Gospel were extensively diffused among the Gentiles as well as Jews, (or in other words, by which mankind were anew created in righteousness and true holiness,) and to be the future judge of all men,—and since these things (and nothing more than these respecting the *nature* or even dignity of Jesus) are taught in those writings, I feel myself authorized to assert that, on their evidence, Unitarianism is the doctrine of the Gospel.

Evidence of JOHN.

XXI. Is it then probable that the *writings of the Apostle* JOHN* alone declare the essential

* Lardner supposes John's Gospel to have been written about the year 68; I am satisfied that it was written before the destruction of Jerusalem: (see Supplement to the Credibility.)—As to the object of the Gospel, Lardner appears to me much nearer the truth, than Michaelis, Priestley, and other eminent critics, who suppose that John wrote in opposition to the Gnostics. It seems, however, that Dr. Priestley confined that supposition to the Introduction; and in his Notes on the Scriptures he does not carry it so far as he did in his History of Early Opinions, Vol. i. p. 181. In his Notes he only states it as his opinion, "that the peculiar phraseology of this Introduction was owing to his (the Apostle's) alluding to the terms made use of in the Gnostic system, and his showing in what sense they may be adopted by Christians." I cannot find any satisfactory reason to suppose, that all the peculiar expressions of the Introduction were, in the Apostle's life-time, used by the Gnostics; and it is, I think, much more probable that Basilides, Valentinus, and others, derived some of their peculiar terms from the Apostle. He appears to me to employ such words as a *Jew*, who had heard the discourses which he records, would very natu-

truths of the Gospel? I do not ask if they *teach* any thing *inconsistent* with those of the other Apostles, who had equally their commission from Jesus, and were equally the partakers of the holy spirit, but, do they *teach*, do they even *imply* any thing *additional* to what we should learn from the others, separate from the evidence of John. I think not, and I proceed to show the grounds of my conviction.

The Apostle begins his Gospel with an animated and highly interesting declaration of the divine authority of Jesus,* and of his agency in the Gospel dispensation. No doubt can, I think, exist in the minds of any who attentively consider the first three chapters, that the Apostle had in view to show the superiority of our Lord's *office*, at least, over that of the Baptist; and all

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rally employ. The propriety of the appellation *the Word* must at once appear on perusing ch. i. 18. viii. 40, &c. As to the terms *life*, and *light*, see ch. xi. 25. xiv. 6. viii. 12. ix. 5. The appellation *μονογενης*, *only* or *only begotten*, is not used by our Lord; but it probably is the Apostle's rendering of that Syro-Chaldaic word which, by the other Evangelists, was translated *αγαπητος* beloved. Why for such appellations as these must we resort to the phraseology of a mystical philosophy?

* As the Apostle expressly asserts, that he wrote his Gospel to convince men, 'that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God,' it is most probable that he had the same view in his Introduction. Unless therefore his words require a different interpretation, we are justified by his own declaration in maintaining this; and that his *own* words do not, (I am fully aware that the common translation does,) I hope to show as I proceed. To me it appears that they perfectly accord with that declaration; and that no contrary interpretation would ever have been adopted, if men had expounded them by the general tenor of the Scriptures, and agreeably to Jewish phraseology, and not by a mystical philosophy. When the contrary interpretation was once given, then they were considered as a proof of the proper deity of one, who *himself* calls God, THE ONLY GOD and the ONLY TRUE GOD, in the latter case in a manner that totally excludes himself. See *John* v. 44, *τον μονον θεον*, and ch. xvii. 3.

who admit that by the Logos the Apostle meant Jesus Christ, must also admit, that in the Introduction he had in view to show his high dignity. How natural would it then have been, if John *knew* of what he is now supposed to *teach*, the proper Deity of our Lord and his eternal power and Godhead, for him to have begun, 'From all eternity the Logos existed; he is the very and eternal God, of one substance, power, and eternity with the Father; he created the heavens and the earth and all things that are in them; &c.' and to have concluded his Gospel by saying, 'These things are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Son of God, the divine Logos, himself very and eternal God, begotten from everlasting of the Father, &c.' And if either of the lower schemes opposing Unitarianism, (particularly the proper Arian scheme,) had been the belief of the Apostle, it strikes me that he would have begun in language very different from what he actually employs, which I think evidently refers, not to the *nature* of Jesus, but to his exalted *character* and *agency* as the Logos.

The Evangelist had seen the wonderful effects of faith in Jesus as the Son of God; he had seen light break in through the midst of the gloomy darkness of heathen superstition and vice; he had seen numbers in those countries where he had resided, or which he had visited, brought into a state of great and glorious privilege, enabled to obtain holiness and happiness, to overcome the world, and to gain everlasting life. He who

once was his friend and companion, who had honoured him with the most endearing intimacy, whom he had seen expiring in agony on the cross, and perhaps assisted to deposit in the sepulchre, had been raised from the grave by the mighty power of God, had been exalted to the highest dignity, and made the dispenser of those powers by which the wondrous change in the state of mankind had been produced so rapidly and extensively. What more natural than that he should begin his memoirs of his exalted friend and master, with words which show his just sense of the dignity of his character, as receiving direct communications from the Most High, and being the agent in dispensing his richest blessings.

[1] *In the beginning** of this new age, this grand æra of the moral world, (the Apostle appears to me to say,) *he was the Word*,† was appointed to be the Revealer of the divine will: *and the Word*

* Αρχη *beginning* occurs twenty-three times in St. John's writings, and is applied fourteen times to the commencement of our Lord's ministry; but it is not once used in them to denote the original creation.

† If this translation be adopted, (and it is equally literal and accurate with the common one,) we must consider the Apostle as commencing with a mind full of his subject, without an idea that any one could doubt to whom he referred. A similar peculiarity is observable in ch. ix. 22, and at the beginning of his first Epistle, &c.; and in other parts of his writings we perceive marks of that inattention to the minute rules of critical nicety, which might naturally be expected from one of those mentioned in *Acts* iv. 13, and whose mind was engrossed by the great truths which he had to communicate. If the Apostle originally gave such a *Title* to his Gospel, or to this portion of it, as we find in *Mark* i. 1, no possible difficulty could exist; and if he had written in English, and, without such title, had said, At the beginning he was the Word, &c., could any one have doubted his meaning?

was with God, favoured by his Heavenly Father with peculiar intercourse with Him, and with express and complete communications respecting that grace and truth which came by him, and the means by which his all-important commission was to be executed: *and the Word was God*, or, rather, a God,* since to him the word of God came, and he was the Representative of the Most High. [2] *The same was in the beginning with God*,† from the first instructed by Him, and

* The Hebrew word *Elohim* (or *Aleim*, according to a different mode of pronunciation,) and the Greek word θεος, corresponding with the appellation *God*, were used with much greater latitude than our more precise modes of expression will permit. Our Lord himself says (*John* x. 34, 35,) 'if he called them Gods (θεους), to whom the word of God (ὁ λογος του θεου) came, and the Scripture cannot be broken,' &c.; and these words show the import of the Hebrew appellation when applied to inferior beings; and they afford abundant reason for the Evangelist's application of it to him, *to whom*, in so extraordinary a degree, *the word of God came*. That St. John did not mean to represent *Christ* as *truly God*, is plain from our Lord's own words, in *John* xvii. 3, where he addresses the FATHER in prayer as the ONLY TRUE GOD. And since in the Hebrew Scriptures, and also in the Greek translation, this high appellation is repeatedly given to *Rulers* and *Prophets*, (see *Exod.* xxi. 6. xxii. 8, 9, 28. 1 *Sam.* xxviii. 13. *Ps.* lxxxii. 1,) and the Supreme Being is represented as saying to Moses, *Exod.* vii. 1. 'Behold! I have made thee a God to Pharaoh, and Aaron thy brother shall be thy Prophet,' it is not probable that the Evangelist could be misunderstood by those for whom he wrote his Gospel. They would naturally consider him as applying the appellation to his honoured Lord, because appointed by God to be the special Revealer of His mind and will, acting under His authority, and aided by the special interpositions of His wisdom and power.—See also Chap. VI. § 1.

† In like manner it is said, *Exod.* xxxiv. 28, Moses 'was there with Jehovah forty days and forty nights.'—When the Evangelist speaks of our Lord as having been, *in the beginning, with God*, he appears, in a particular manner, to refer to the period which our Lord passed in the Desert, after his baptism; during which he was not only exposed to temptation, but, without a doubt, was favoured with peculiar intercourse with his heavenly Father, and received from him the knowledge of his will and purposes respecting man-

receiving all his high powers and his inspired knowledge directly from Him. [3] *All things** relative to the Christian dispensation *were done*† or executed *through him:* aided by divine power, and acting under divine authority, he accomplished the gracious purposes for which he came; *and without him was not any thing done that was done:* he gave the Apostles their commission, and illuminated their minds; he communicated to them the miraculous powers by which they were to diffuse and establish the Gospel; he continually directed them in their great work; and it was through his agency, that the world was anew created, and Gentiles as well as Jews placed in a state of spiritual privilege, and made heirs of eternal salvation. [4] *In* or by *him was life, and the life was the light of men:* [5] *And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not:* he had authority to reveal everlasting life, to enlighten thereby the darkness of nature, and extend the prospects of man-

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kind. To the devout and holy mind of Jesus, this must be heaven itself.

* Παντα '*all things*' may and often must be taken (as I shall hereafter show) in a restricted sense; it never signifies the universe in John's writings; and that this Apostle indisputably uses it to signify all things relative to the Christian dispensation, see especially 1 *John* ii. 20. 'but ye have an unction from the Holy One, and know all things' παντα.

† The original word γινομαι, here translated *made* in the P.V., is employed many huudred times in the N.T.; but in no clear instance in reference to the *original creation;* and the same is almost uniformly the case in the Septuagint. Its peculiar force is to denote *change of state.* It may be translated, *to become, to come, to be done, to be made* or *formed, to be born, to be,* &c.—Some farther remarks on the import of the word will be found in Chap. VI. § 2.

kind to an eternal world; yet men loved darkness rather than light; and too many rejected the offered blessings.—The Apostle then declares that John was a divine messenger, sent to bear witness to him who was to give to men the light of life; but that he was not himself the Light which was to enlighten mankind:* and continues in *v.* 9. *That was the true Light which, having come into the world*, or having come forth from God, *is giving light to every man*,† to mankind in general, without any regard to civil or religious distinctions. [10] *He was in the world;* he dwelt among men while engaged in executing his important commission; *and the world was made* or formed anew *through him:* introduced by him into a new state, a state of blessed and sanctifying privilege;‡ *and yet the*

* It is probable, from various expressions in the former part of John's Gospel, that some of the disciples of the Baptist retained their attachment to their master, and represented him, and not Jesus Christ, as the chief person. Ecclesiastical History speaks of a sect, holding such opinions, called Sabians.

† From a peculiarity in the construction of the original, the clause *coming into the world* may refer to the *true light*, or to *every man*. The former appears to give a preferable rendering.—*Coming into the world, being sent into the world, coming forth from God*, and *coming from heaven*, are expressions of nearly the same import; denoting that a person has received a commission from God, and is sent among mankind to execute it. Compare *John* xvii. 18.

‡ That this verse cannot refer to the original creation, see the various passages which will be cited in Chap. VI. § 2; all proving, or founded upon, the great truth, that JEHOVAH, God of Israel, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, was the sole Creator of the universe, and that he exercised his creating power without any subordinate agency,—or, as the Scriptures express it, *by his great power and outstretched arm*, ALONE, and BY HIMSELF. (See *Jer.* xxvii. 5. *Is.* xliv. 24.) In the great change effected by the Gospel in the spiritual condition of mankind, (of which the Apostle Paul

world knew him not, he was despised and rejected of men. [11] *He came unto his own people*, the Jewish nation, peculiarly the people of the Messiah; *but his own received him not:* [12] *But to as many as received him, gave he the privilege of becoming children of God*,* the objects of divine favour here, and heirs of a blessed immortality; even *to those who believe in his name*, [13] *who have been born*, or introduced into this state of sanctifying privilege, *not by blood, nor by the will of the flesh, nor by the will of man*, *i.e.* (whatever be the precise meaning of each clause) not by Jewish descent or proselytism, *but by God*, through His gracious disposals, and in consequence of their godly disposition.—[14] *And the Word*, this illustrious Revealer of the divine will, though highly exalted by the Father's love and favour, and appointed to high dignity and power, *became* or was *flesh:* he was 'a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.'† We might have expected that he would be raised above the common lot of humanity; but he was subject to infirmity, distress, and mortality, and exposed to want and suffering; and at last experienced the shame and

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repeatedly speaks as a *creation*,) Jesus Christ *was* the appointed agent.

* In Jewish phraseology, these were termed *Sons of God* or *Children of God*, who resembled him in their moral character, or who were especial objects of the divine favour, or who were appointed by him to offices of dignity and importance. See Chap. VI. § 3.

† The word σαρξ *flesh*, "frequently and peculiarly stands for *man*, considered as *mortal*, and subject to *infirmities* and *sufferings*." See *Improved Version*, and *Schleusner*, No. 3. 4.

agony of the cross. *And* for a short time *he dwelt among us full of grace and truth*, with all the faithfulness and benignity of affectionate friendship;* *and we beheld his glory*, the glorious displays of divine power by which his authority was confirmed, and the ennobling marks of divine approbation,—*glory as of an only Son*† *from his Father.* [15] *John* too *bare witness concerning him, and cried, saying*, "*This is he of whom I said, He that cometh after me hath become before me*, has taken precedency of me in dignity and power; *for he was* indeed *my superior*, my principal, the great object of my ministry, to prepare whose way I have been sent forth from God."

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* The Greek is, πληρης χαριτος και αληθειας. The Apostle afterwards (v. 17,) uses ἡ χαρις και ἡ αληθεια in opposition to ὁ νομος—I lay no stress upon my interpretation in a *doctrinal* point of view; but it seems to me the most natural. The Apostle first uses the words in reference to the humanity of Jesus, in the sense which his intimate friendship with his honoured Lord naturally dictated: he is afterwards led by the train of thought, to employ the same words in reference to the purposes of his mission, in the sense dictated by those purposes.

A similar mode of composition is, I think, employed in the parenthetical clause of the verse; 'And we beheld his glory, την δοξαν αυτου, glory as of an only son from a father, δοξαν ὡς μονογενους παρα πατρος,' where the Apostle appears to speak merely by comparison and indefinitely; but he afterwards uses the words definitely v. 18.—That by δοξα, *glory*, the Apostle refers principally to the miracles of our Lord is sufficiently obvious from ch. ii. 11. 'This beginning of miracles Jesus made in Cana of Galilee, and manifested his glory την δοξαν αυτου.' The Apostle was also a witness of his transfiguration, and probably of other direct proofs of the divine approbation, 'approbation as of an only son from a father.'

† The Greek word here rendered *only*, and in the P.V. *only-begotten*, is used in circumstances (*e.g.* when applied to Isaac and Solomon) which show its force to be *beloved as an only son*, as well as strictly an *only son*. The Apostle John never uses the word αγαπητος *beloved* in reference to Christ; but uses μονογενης *only*, or *only-begotten*, apparently in the place of it.

And well he might, [16] *since of his fulness*, of those abundant blessings which he came to communicate, *have we all received, even grace for grace, i.e.* grace proportioned to the gracious gifts of the Father to him, or, gracious privileges beyond the privileges of the former dispensation. [17] *For the Law was given by Moses, but grace and truth* (or the true grace) *came by Jesus Christ.* [18] *No one hath seen* God at any time; i.e.* no one hath been favoured by God with such clear disclosures of the secret purposes of his grace, as He communicated through Christ: *the Only Son, who is in the bosom of the Father*, enjoying, in his more immediate presence, the tokens of his love and approbation, *he hath revealed Him.*

Such is the idea which (in its leading features) I have long entertained of the meaning of this much misunderstood, yet not obscure, passage. Without laying any stress upon my own interpretation in its minuter parts, I feel more and more satisfied as to the general principles of it; and so far from considering the passage as inconsistent with Unitarianism, it appears to me to declare the proper humanity of the Logos, and to contain nothing which, when interpreted by the general tenor of the New Testament and other passages of the Apostle's writings, is inapplicable to one who was strictly and properly

* Though it is true that God is the 'King eternal, immortal, and invisible,' that he dwelleth 'in light which no man can approach unto,' that 'no man hath seen or can see' Him, (see 1 *Tim.* i. 17. vi. 16,) yet the connexion here appears to point out another related meaning of the word *see: viz.* to *understand*, to *know*.

a man, but entrusted with the most illustrious commission, favoured with the most intimate communion with God for the purposes of his mission, and made the agent in the communication of the most important blessings. This passage declares no more of Jesus than what the Apostle assures us he wrote his Gospel to prove, *viz.* that he is the Christ, the Son of God; and I am satisfied that the rest of his writings teach us nothing further, respecting the nature of our Saviour. In fact, *the Gospel of John*, though it contains some expressions which, when interpreted by prevailing opinions, seem to intimate the pre-existence of our Lord, yet *more than any other part of the New Testament affords proof, that whatever powers Jesus possessed, he derived them from God,—that he was inferior to and dependent upon Him,—that he was sent by God,—and made it his steady aim to do the will of God.*

But let us consider the evidence of this Gospel somewhat more in detail. The Evangelist records the assertion of others* that Jesus was the Son of Joseph, without any comment. Now without here considering how far this affects the truth of the miraculous conception, I ask whether it is probable that one who believed him to be the very and eternal God, or even that he pre-existed in a nature infinitely more excellent than human, and was the creator of all things, would so write, without at least some where

* *John* i. 45, vi. 42.

explicitly informing his readers that Jesus was, though in some sense a man, yet possessed of a nature infinitely beyond that of man? In the same manner he records instances* in which the appellation *man* is employed respecting him, also without any guard or comment. Surely either every Christian then knew, (without having been taught, for we have seen that the other Apostles did not teach it,) that Jesus was a "God-man," or the Evangelist himself did not know it: at any rate, he has written as no one would now write for the information of new converts or the conversion of Heathens, who laid any stress upon the mysterious doctrines of the first and second Articles. Admit the hypothesis which they teach, and while perusing the Gospels, and especially the Gospel of John, one is involved in perplexity: the simple narratives of his ministry appear artificial and obscure: sometimes the "God-Man" must be referred to, sometimes the God, and sometimes the Man only,† contrary to the most plain and obvious sense of Scripture: and even Jesus himself, in whom was no guile, maintained for above thirty years the character of a human being,—spoke and acted and felt as one,—declared the source of his divine knowledge and power,—and even said expressly, without guard or comment, that he was a man; and, on the other hand, never gave his followers,

* *John* iv. 29. vii. 46. ix. 11, &c.

† Ch. vii. 3. xi. 33, 35. xii. 27. xiii. 23. xvii. xix. 30, 42, &c.

during the period of his ministry upon earth, any intimation of his being the very and eternal God, or the Creator of the world, or even, in explicit language, that he existed before his human birth in a state of glory and happiness.* The Unitarians are charged by all other parties, with neglecting the plain and obvious sense of Scripture; but if the charge were just, the Trinitarians are not those who should throw the first stone. Jesus himself says to the Jews, 'ye seek to kill *me, a* MAN† *that have spoken to you the truth which I have heard from God.*‡ He declares that the wonderful works which he performed were not performed by his own power, but by the power of God:§ that he came down

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* It may perhaps be said, that he has, in the most explicit language, and in the most solemn situation, while praying to God, spoken of the glory which he had with God before the foundation of the world; (ch. xvii. 5.) I shall show in the next Part (see Chap. VII.) that there is thoroughly adequate reason to understand παρα σοι *with thee*, in the same sense as παρα Κυριῳ *with the Lord*, 2 *Pet.* iii. 8.

The expression (ch. viii. 58) πριν Αβρααμ γενεσθαι εγω ειμι has been construed into a proof of the pre-existence; but whatever *literal* rendering be given it, it cannot be supposed *explicitly* to teach that doctrine. That the passage does not teach it at all, I shall endeavour to show in Chap. VII.

† *John* viii. 40. ανθρωπος, *a human being.*

‡ How this passage is shown by Trinitarians to be consistent with their creed, I do not know. I have examined Doddridge, Whitby, Poole, Hammond, and Wolf; but with the exception of Wolf, they either knew of no difficulty, or did not think it necessary to notice it. Wolf refers us to Gusetus, who, he says, has refuted the arguments derived from this passage by an anonymous Unitarian; but I have no means of access to that writer. To myself it appears to throw an insuperable difficulty upon the doctrine of the proper deity of our Saviour.

§ Ch. v. 36. 'For the works which my Father hath given me to perform, the same works that I do, bear witness of me that the

from heaven, (or came forth from God,) not to do his own will, but the will of Him who sent him:* that his doctrine was not his own, but that of Him who sent him.† We find that he manifested the affections of human nature, as possessed by minds of virtuous sensibility:‡ that he experienced deep distress of mind at the incredulity of his nation, and at the prospect of his own sufferings:§ that he *prayed* to God,‖ whom he calls the ONLY TRUE GOD, and his Father and GOD.¶ Indeed, if any one can read the delightful and deeply affecting narrative contained in the last eleven chapters of John, without *feeling* that Jesus was, as to nature, *in all respects like his brethren*, though the highly honoured messenger and representative of the Most High, he can do more than I can. Were I to be convinced that Jesus possessed a nature infinitely beyond human nature, I should cease to perceive the simplicity of truth; and those affections of tenderness, of sympathy, of respect, of reverence, of gratitude, which the narrative now raises up spontaneously, would be checked by the perplexity and embarrassment of this compound nature, and by the perhaps scarcely

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Father hath sent me.' Ch. xiv. 10. 'The Father who dwelleth in me, He doeth the works.'

* *John* vi. 38. † Ch. vii. 16.

‡ Ch. xi. 35, 36. xiii. 23. xix. 26.

§ Ch. xii. 27. ‖ Ch. xii. 28. xvii.

¶ Ch. xx. 17. 'but go to *my Brethren* and say unto them, I ascend unto *my Father and your Father*, TO MY GOD AND YOUR GOD.' These are the words of Jesus to his affectionate disciple Mary of Magdala, *after* he had been 'declared to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead.' *Rom.* i. 4.

acknowledged conviction, that thus God could not feel and act, thus God could not suffer and die, thus God could not pray.—Blessed be God, the Scriptures make not the blessings of the Gospel to depend upon the belief of such mysteries: *This is life eternal, that we know the only true God and Jesus Christ whom he has sent.*

But perhaps I shall be told, that if Jesus has spoken of himself as a man, he has also spoken of his being truly and properly God, or at least of his existence before his human birth. If he have, I bow to his authority.—But in what place has he done so? I am fully aware that persons who are ignorant of the original languages of the Scriptures, consider our Saviour as calling himself (ch. viii. 58,) by the peculiar appellation of Jehovah, God of Israel, *viz.* I AM; and there are ingenious critics, who have discovered what they regard as at least probable reasons for supposing, that though our Lord no where *declares* himself to be God, yet he here *intended to intimate* that he is the I AM: but I am persuaded that this cannot be considered as the certain import of his words, by any who attentively weigh the force of the original expressions, and bear in mind the very important facts, that Jesus himself, in the solemn act of prayer, addressed the FATHER as THE ONLY TRUE GOD, and, in this very chapter, spoke of HIMSELF, as a MAN who declared the truths which he had heard from God. So far from employing the epithet *God* in reference to himself, we find that

when the Jews charged him with blasphemy, and asserted that he, being a man, made himself God,* our Lord shows indeed that if he had done so, he should have been justified by the phraseology of the Jewish Scriptures; but at the same time he manifestly refutes the charge, by repeating what he had actually called himself, 'the Son of God;' and, as I think, assigns the reason of this appellation, *viz.* that the Father had sanctified and sent him into the world.—But 'he permitted one of his Apostles to address him as God, without any rebuke or notice.' Whether the Apostle did so address him, is a point of some difficulty; on the whole it appears to me more probable that he did; and, the words of our Lord just now referred to, fully justified the appellation of Thomas. Employing the Jewish idiom, Jesus *was* a God, as being a representative of God, as being one 'to whom the word of God came;' and a Jewish disciple, who from his infancy must have been imbued with the strictest ideas of the unity and unrivalled supremacy of God, and accustomed by the scriptural usage of the appellation *God* to great latitude in the employment of it, could have no hesitation, in such circumstances, in employing it when addressing one respecting whom there was such abundant and peculiar proof, that to him the word of God came, that he was the representative of the Most High.†—If Jesus were properly God, he himself asserts nothing of the kind: he

* *John* x. 33. See Note (*) p. 62.
† On this passage see Chap. VI. § 1.

uses, indeed, strong language in reference to the dignified character which he sustained, from which it has been *inferred* that he was properly God; but unless this astonishing doctrine is somewhere distinctly declared to us, the inference must fail, if his words will justly allow of any other explanation; and that they do, I shall briefly show in my next Part.

But "if words have any force, and be to be interpreted in the plain and obvious sense," it has often been said, and perhaps long will be said, "the Evangelist John has recorded express declarations of our Lord which prove that he existed before his human birth." Where? I again ask. "The Gospel is full of them; no one can read it with an unprejudiced mind without admitting that thus much is distinctly taught in it."—As in former instances, I admit that there are several passages which, if this doctrine were established, might receive a suitable interpretation upon it; but I contend, that *the general tenor of the Scripture language and history is, that Jesus was a* MAN, *in the strict and proper sense of the term, sanctified and sent into the world by the* GOD OF JESUS, *and that the* GOD AND FATHER *of Jesus is* THE ONLY GOD; and that therefore if these and other passages will admit of a just interpretation agreeably to this general tenor, they will prove nothing which is not consistent with it. According to the common translation, for instance,* our Lord is considered as expressly

* *John* xvii. 5. See Note (*) p. 70.

referring to a state of glory, in which he actually existed at some former period; but the original, if we interpret it by corresponding expressions, leads to no such conclusion. The words of our Lord obviously refer, as I hope to show,* to glory which, *with God*, in *His* sight with whom a thousand years are as one day, he had before the world began to exist. So again, in several passages our Lord speaks of his *coming down from heaven*, &c. Now this and similar expressions are capable of a correct interpretation upon each of at least three hypotheses,—*viz.* (1) that Jesus existed before his human birth: (2) that, at the time of his receiving his divine commission, he was taken up from earth, into some place which is *permanently* favoured with peculiar manifestations of the divine presence: and, (3) that he was, at that period, in some place which *for the time* was favoured with peculiar manifestations of the divine presence;—and consequently, of themselves they prove neither, but we are to seek for proof as to the matter of fact from other parts of the Scriptures. Without here entering farther into the point, I assert then, without hesitation, that of themselves these expressions prove nothing.—I believe there is only one other expression which would be regarded as an *independent* proof of the pre-existence; I refer to that contained in ch. viii. 58, 'Before Abraham was, (or rather, before he shall become Abraham,)

* See this and the following expressions considered in Chap. VII.

I am *he*.' That the passage is attended with some difficulty, (I do not mean on the Unitarian scheme merely,) is admitted; but I contend, that in the plain and obvious sense of words, the assertion 'I am *he*,' refers to the time actually present when the words were used, the time which Abraham foresaw, in which our Lord was speaking,—and not to the time before which Abraham existed, which it must do if it favour the doctrine of pre-existence.

Still the Evangelist may have expressly declared doctrines which it is, I think, obvious that our Lord did not himself teach while on earth. I see no such declaration; I see nothing from which it can be satisfactorily inferred, that he considered Jesus as a being of a superior *nature*. That he gives the high appellation *God* to him on whose bosom he once reclined as the beloved friend,* is to me clear; and he needs no farther justification than what is afforded by those words of Jesus which he himself records, and to which I have more than once referred.†

* Peter rebuked one whom many suppose to have been the Great God of heaven and earth, (*Matt.* xvi. 22.) John leaned on his bosom; and yet neither, as far as we can discover, ever manifested those feelings which one would suppose must necessarily arise upon an acquaintance with the fact, that he whom they had treated so familiarly was the very and eternal God; though both had suitable opportunities of so doing. We have several declarations of Peter respecting his exalted Lord, subsequent to the effusion of the holy spirit; and John tells us of his own familiarity with Jesus, of the friendship of Jesus for himself and others; yet neither introduces one expression of surprise, not one expression indicating the feeling with which such recollections must have been accompanied, not one unambiguous declaration of the supposed fact.

† See p. 62, Note (*).

—He also says* that the Jews were about to stone Jesus, not only for having broken the Sabbath, but for calling God his own Father, thus 'making himself like God;' and he leaves the point without any comment. This I admit; and I have only to add, that the Evangelist has given us abundant reason to consider Jesus as representative of God, as his highly favoured and beloved Son, the chosen revealer of His will: and if the last clause—making himself like God—be considered as the inference of the Evangelist himself, which it scarcely can be, our Lord's likeness to God is sufficiently explained in various parts of the Gospel: it consisted in working the work of God, in doing those things which God commissioned him to do.—The Evangelist gives our Saviour the high appellation of the only-begotten, or only, Son of God; but I imagine few, if any, competent judges would lay any stress upon this epithet, as an *independent* proof of the superior *nature* of our Lord; and to me it appears peculiarly appropriate to one of whom his beloved Apostle says, that all things were done by him, and that God gave him the spirit without measure; and who was appointed the sole medium of the most illustrious display of the divine perfections, the most gracious revelation of the divine purposes with respect to mankind.

XXII. It may however be said, that the

* John v. 18. See Chap. V.

Gospel of John, being a history of our Lord while in the flesh, must, as far as respects his *nature*, principally refer to his human nature. It does indeed; but do the *Epistles of John* speak of more? Not in the slightest degree. He says, 'Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God,* and, 'whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God;'† but not in one genuine word of his Epistles, does he so much as intimate that more than this and its consequences must be believed, in order to enjoy the blessings of the Gospel, or even that more than this was the fact.‡—These Epistles were probably the last written books of the New Testament, the Revelation excepted. If (as I think) the first were written *before* the destruction of Jerusalem, still it is reasonable to suppose that the Apostle had seen, or heard of, most of the writings of the other Apostles. If they were not explicit as to the proper deity of Christ, here we may expect to find a direct avowal of this astonishing doctrine; for is it probable that the Apostle would leave

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* 1 *John* iv. 15. † Ch. v. 1.

‡ There are three passages in this Epistle which may by some be considered as proving the above assertion to be unfounded, ch. iii. 16. v. 7. 20. As to ch. iii. 16, even the Received Text has 'Hereby perceive we love, because he laid down his life for us.'—No one who has any claim to the character of a critic, can well be ignorant that the passage respecting the three heavenly witnesses, was not written in *Greek* till at least 1100 years after the Epistle was written.—And as to ch. v. 20, one would suppose that no reader of the Gospel of John (ch. xvii. 3,) could doubt to which the word *this* refers, whether to 'Him that is true,' or, to 'His Son Jesus Christ.'—See however Chap. V.

the world without placing the subject upon its just foundation—the authority of an Apostle of Christ? And even if they had said enough, is it probable that one who obviously was not remiss in speaking of the dignity and glory of his Lord, should write an Epistle on the subject of Jesus and his glad tidings, without even referring to his being "the very and eternal God," or to his having existed in a state of great glory and happiness before his human birth?

I lay considerable stress upon the striking deficiency of evidence as to the superior nature and pre-existence of Jesus Christ, in the undisputed Epistle of the beloved Apostle. He wrote to confirm the faith of the believers, and, as appears from several expressions, to censure heresies then beginning to prevail in the Church.* Now from the account given in the Acts of the preaching of Peter and Paul, it can scarcely be doubted, that a large proportion of the Christian world must have embraced the Gospel, without knowing what are now called its peculiar doctrines;† and it also appears from ecclesiastical

* The Gnostics in general, believed that Jesus himself was not the Christ, and that a super-angelic spirit, which alone they called the Christ, was united to him at his baptism. And many of them believed, that the Christ was not united with a proper human body, but with something which had only the appearance of one.—These are obviously the opinions which the Apostle censures and refutes.

† A work is just published (Nov. 1822) having the following title: "The Constitution of the Character of Jesus Christ. In Two "Parts. Part I. The Constitution of the Character of Jesus Christ "shown to differ from the Opinions of Socinians, Arians, Trinitarians, "and Swedenborgians. Part II. On the Moral Character of Jesus, "the Office of Christ, and the Holy Spirit. The argument of this "Work rests chiefly upon a fact, hitherto overlooked; *viz.* that

history, that the Jewish believers in general were Unitarians: is it conceivable, that John should permit opinions which now are regarded by the party who call themselves Evangelical, as in direct opposition to his Gospel, and as degrading the Saviour of men, to pass without severe censure; or that he should satisfy himself with saying, 'These things I have written unto you, that ye may know that ye have everlasting life, who believe in the name of the Son of God;'* and, 'Every spirit which confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God?'—I am willing to admit, that several passages in the New Testament, taken separately from their connexion, and interpreted by prevalent opinions, without comparing them with other parts of Scripture, do *then* seem to imply, that our Saviour existed before his human birth, and even that he possessed a nature greatly superior to that of man; but where the scriptural grounds are of that mysterious doctrine called the Trinity in Unity, —*viz.* that "in unity of this Godhead there be three Persons of one *substance*, POWER, and eternity,"† that "the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God; and yet the yare not three Gods, but one God,"‡ I am totally at a loss to discover;—and my repeated examina-

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"*the Apostles, for twenty-five years at least, laboured under the* "*Jewish prejudice, that the Messiah was a mere man; but after-* "*wards having their attention excited more particularly to the* "*subject, they discovered his Divinity.*"

* This is Griesbach's text in 1 *John* v. 18.

† Article I. ‡ Athanasian Creed.

tion of the New Testament with an express reference to this subject, has most strongly confirmed my conviction, that this doctrine has *no* foundation in the Scriptures, that it is *not* Christian doctrine.

XXIII. The last book in the New Testament (A.D. 95 or 96) is 'the Revelation of Jesus Christ which GOD GAVE HIM that he might show to his servants things which must shortly come to pass.'* This introduction leads to the expectation that nothing will be found in the book itself, inconsistent with the proper unity of the Deity, nothing which can authorize the supposition that God and Christ are different persons in one God. While in the spirit on the Lord's-day, John sees his glorified Master, in appearance a man as when he sojourned among the sons of men.† He speaks as one who is head over all things to his church, and directs his servant to reprove those who were departing from the faith.‡ He speaks too as the agent in conferring rewards upon the faithful; 'Him that overcometh I will make a pillar in the temple of MY GOD, and he shall go out no more: and I will write upon him the name of MY GOD, and the name of the city of MY GOD, of the new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from MY GOD; and, my new name.'§ What words can be more express to prove that, in this state of exaltation, he regarded God, as he regarded

* *Rev.* i. 1. † Ch. i. 13—17. ‡ Ch. ii. 4. § Ch. iii. 12.

him when on earth, as *his* God and Father, as well as the God and Father of his disciples?* He does indeed use language respecting himself, which must have delighted the heart of his faithful disciple; since it manifested the glory and happiness with which he was rewarded for his perseverance and victory, and proved that he had power to give like glory and happiness to those also who were faithful unto the end.† John saw him too receive the homage of those who, by his endurance unto death, had been redeemed to God; and though the whole was a vision, yet, for the time, its effect upon the mind of this favoured disciple, must have been that of reality, and must have been transporting beyond conception: but *even in heaven* he represents the Lamb as among the worshippers of Jehovah, the 'Lord God Almighty.'‡ In the latter part of the vision, he sees an august personage, called the Word of God, who is usually considered as Jesus himself;§ and though this opinion seems to me attended with some difficulty, on the whole it is perhaps the most probable. If it be the case, as the passage refers to some awful period, when the judgments of God will be on all those nations which have not feared God and worked righteousness, the full explanation of it must be left to the event; but it obviously contains nothing inconsistent with Unitarianism.—On the whole, since this sublime

* *John* xx. 17.
† See particularly *Rev.* iii. 21, &c.
‡ Ch. xv. 3.
§ Ch. xix. 11—16.

representation of the *exalted state of Jesus* contains *nothing* in any way *inconsistent** *with* the belief of *his simple humanity*, and in no way indicates that his nature was *superior to that of man*, —as he speaks of God as HIS GOD,—and as the *distinction is most strictly and uniformly observed between him* (the grand subordinate agent in the Christian scheme, and therefore, in reference to the kingdom of the Messiah, the greatest of all beings under God,) *and that Great Being* who, throughout the whole, *is alone called God*, and who *alone is represented as truly and properly God*,—I consider it a very strong corroborative proof of the doctrine of the proper or simple humanity of Jesus: for it is to me almost inconceivable, that such a vision should contain no intimation, (or even no positive proof,) of his superior nature, if he possessed such nature; and absolutely inconceivable, that it should contain no positive proof that he was truly and properly God, God over all blessed for ever, if such were the fact.

As I have extended my view of the evidence for these doctrines far beyond my original in-

* The words, 'I am Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last, and,' (ch. i. 11,) are rejected by Griesbach as spurious; and in ch. i. 8, he reads, 'saith the Lord God, who is' &c.—Some interpret the expression 'the root of David,' ch. v. 5. xxii. 16, as referring to the pre-existence, or even the creating power of Jesus; but I am not aware that any consider it as a proof of those doctrines. That the expression means 'a rod from the stem of David, a scion from his roots,' is obvious from *Isa.* xi. 10, compared with v. 1. of the same chapter; and I think that it farther implies such a shoot, as itself takes root and becomes a tree,—a root arising from the trunk of David.—That the word ῥιζα *root* is several times used in the Apocrypha in the sense of *offspring*, see Schleusner, No. 6.

tention, I shall now briefly recapitulate it in the order which I have followed, requesting my readers to interpret any expressions which, from their conciseness, may appear ambiguous, by the paragraphs to which reference is made; and premising the following explanation of terms. 1. By the *Equality of Jesus with the Father*, I refer to the doctrine so extensively adopted by the Christian world, and expressed in the Articles of the Church of England, *viz.* that he was "the very and eternal God," "of one substance, POWER, and eternity," with the Father. 2. By the *Proper Deity of Jesus*, I refer to the opinion that our Lord, though inferior to the Father, was very greatly superior in nature to man, that he possessed attributes which rendered him truly and properly God, and that he was the Creator of the world. 3. By the *Pre-existence of Jesus* I mean the opinion that he existed before he came into this world, in a state of great glory and happiness, without supposing that he possessed any of the essential attributes of Deity.* And 4, by the *Simple or Proper Humanity of Jesus*, I understand the opinion, that

* Many of those passages which the Arian can fairly adduce, in favour of his opinion of the proper deity (and *consequently* pre-existence,) of our Lord, either prove the proper deity, or are in no respect contrary to the simple humanity. The evidence appearing to favour the *simple* pre-existence, is very slight indeed; and, while those who maintain it, agree with the Unitarian in the opinion, that the evidence for the proper deity of our Lord is totally inadequate to prove a doctrine so inconsistent with the general tenor of the New Testament, they do not seem to be aware, that it is, in a great measure, on the *same* evidence, (which proves more or nothing,) that their own doctrine rests.

this Representative of the Most High, this illustrious Revealer of his gracious purposes to mankind, was stricly and properly a human being, having no existence before his human birth.

The doctrine of the equality of Jesus with the Father is favoured indirectly by the general evidence for the proper deity of our Lord; but it is opposed by much of what is contained in this evidence. On the other hand, whatever opposes the doctrine of the proper deity of Jesus, still more opposes that of his equality with the Father. The reader is therefore requested to refer to the second column as well as to the first, for the evidence against the last mentioned doctrine.

If the evidence for the proper deity, or preexistence of our Lord, be inadequate, the doctrine of his proper or simple humanity follows of course. Hence where Jesus Christ is spoken of, silence as to any supposed superior nature, is positive evidence in favour of his simple or proper humanity.

The six following pages contain, I trust, a faithful SUMMARY OF THE EVIDENCE OF EACH SEPARATE BOOK IN THE NEW TESTAMENT, IN FAVOUR OF THE PRINCIPAL OPINIONS RESPECTING THE PERSON OF JESUS CHRIST. I believe no explanation will be found necessary respecting the plan adopted.

	Equality with the Father.	*Proper Deity.*
Titus A.D. 56 or 63.	A *strange* rendering of ii. 13.—*Directly opposed* by i. 1, and by the *true* rendering of ii. 13.	*Nothing;* for it is *opposed* by the *false* rendering of ii. 13.
2 Cor. A.D. 57.	*Remote inference* from xiii. 14.—*Absolutely contradictory* to xi. 31. and *directly opposed* by several other passages	*Remote inference* from iv. 4. according to which it might be proved that *any* man is God, see 1 Cor. xi. 7.
Rom. A.D. 58.	A rendering ix. 5. *contradictory to Paul's own words* in other places, and in no way *required* by the original.—*Directly opposed* by xvi. 27, &c.	*Remote inference* from i. 3, 4. x. 12, 13.—*Opposed* by the *common* rendering of ix. 5; and by v. 15, &c.
Eph. A.D. 61.	*Nothing.--Absolutely inconsistent* with i. 17. ii. 5, 6. and *directly opposed* by i. 2. 20. vi. 23, &c.	*Inference* from i. 20—23. iii. 9.—*Absolutely contradictory* to iv. 6, and really *opposed* by i. 20—23, &c.
2 Tim. A.D. 61 or 64.	*Nothing.—Directly opposed* by i. 1, 2.	*Nothing.*
Phil. A.D. 62.	*Nothing--Absolutely contradictory* to ii. 9. 11. *Directly opposed* by i 2. 11, &c.	*Common* interpretation of ii. 6—11; in no way *required* by the words of the Apostle.
Col. A.D. 62.	*Inference* from ii. 9.—*Absolutely contradictory* to i. 3. 15.—*Directly opposed* by i. 19. iii. 1.	*Common* interpretation of i. 15—19, which is supposed to ascribe to him the original creation of the world. Also a *remote* inference from ii. 9.
Philem.	*Directly opposed* by i. 3.	*Nothing.*
Heb. A.D. 63.	*Countenanced* by an *erroneous* interpretation of i. 10--12.--*Absolutely contradictory* to i. 9. ii. 17, 18. iv. 15. v. 7, 8, &c. and *directly* opposed by i. 2. ii. 10. x. 7. &c.	*Countenanced* by the *common* interpretation of different parts of ch. i; but *opposed* by various parts of the Epistle, and *expressly contrary* to ii. 14, 17, 18. iv. 15, &c.

Pre-existence.	*Simple or Proper Humanity.*
Nothing.	*Complete silence* as to a *superior nature.*
Inference from viii. 9, obviously *admitting*, if not *requiring*, a different interpretation.	*Nothing* in any way *inconsistent* with the *simple humanity.*
Nothing, unless it be inferred from i. 3. viii. 3.	*Nothing* in any way *inconsistent* with the *simple humanity* of Christ. He is called a MAN in the most *unqualified* manner; and a *stress* is laid upon his being a MAN, without *any* intimation that he was *not* man in the *common* acceptation of the word.
Nothing.	*Complete silence* of the Apostle as to a *superior nature.* He speaks of his *exaltation* to important agency in the new dispensation, where a superior nature is supposed to be spoken of.
Nothing.	*Complete silence* as to a *superior nature; unqualified language* respecting his *proper humanity.*
Inference from ii. 7.	*Nothing* even *apparently* implying a *superior nature*, except a passage admitting of a *suitable* application to the *Man* Christ Jesus.
Inference from i. 15, 17. (N.B. The passage *proves more or nothing.*)	*Real silence* as to a *superior nature;* but *apparently opposed* by the passages here referred to, which however refer to the *high dignity* and *agency* of the *exalted* Saviour.
Nothing.	*Silence* as to a *superior nature.*
Remote inferences from vii. 3. x. 5. xi. 26. and passages which *prove more or nothing.*	*Direct assertions* of the Writer; opposed only by expressions *admitting* a *just* interpretation *consistent* with those assertions.

	Equality with the Father.	*Proper Deity.*
JAMES A.D. 61 or 62.	*Nothing.—Directly opposed* by i. 1.	*Nothing.*
JUDE A.D. 64 or 65.	A *strange* rendering of i. 4.—*Absolutely contradictory* to the true reading of i. 23.	*Nothing*--*Absolutely contradictory* to the true reading of i. 23.
JOHN *Gospel.* A.D. 68.	*Countenanced* by the *mistranslation* of i. 1—3. 10. v. 18. and by the *misinterpretation* of v. 23. viii. 58. x. 30. xiv. 11.—*Directly opposed* by the *general tenor* of the Gospel, which expressly asserts the *subordination* and *inferiority* of Jesus; and *absolutely contradictory* to xiv. 28. xvii. 3. xx. 17, &c.	*Countenanced* by the usual translation and interpretation of the Introduction; by those passages which speak of his peculiar authority, and of a peculiar union with the Father; and by the declaration of Thomas.—*Directly opposed* by the *express assertions of our Lord himself*, that the FATHER is the ONLY TRUE GOD, and the ONLY GOD, and by the *general tenor* of the Gospel.
Epistles A.D. 69 or 80—90.	An *interpretation* of v. 20, which makes the Apostle *contradict* our Lord himself; and the *spurious* words in v. 7, 8.—*Directly opposed* by the *whole tenor* of the Epistle.	*Nothing* but the *spurious* reading in iii. 16.
Revelation A.D. 95 or 96.	*Nothing* but the *false* reading of i. 11.—*Directly opposed* by i. 1. iii. 12. 14, &c.	*Nothing* but those passages which represent the homage paid to Jesus in his glorified state, when actually present; and the expression, 'Beginning of the creation of God.'

Pre-existence.	*Simple or Proper Humanity.*
Nothing.	*Complete silence* as to a *superior nature.*
Nothing.	*Complete silence* as to a *superior nature.*
Countenanced by the *usual* interpretation of i. 15. iii. 13. 31. vi. 33. 38. 51. 62. viii. 58. xvi. 28. xvii. 5: all of which *admit* of a *just* interpretation *consistent* with the *proper humanity* of Jesus.—*Directly opposed* by the *general tenor* of the history, and by the *declaration of our Lord himself*, viii. 40.	*Countenanced* by the *assertion* of the *Evangelist* (i. 14), and by the *express declaration* of our *Lord himself*, (viii. 40); and by the *general tenor* of the *history*, which is that of MAN, *who felt the affections of a man*, was regarded *and treated as a man, experienced the sufferings of a man, and at last died as a man.*—*Apparently* opposed by passages which, *as usually interpreted*, refer to his supposed prior existence, and even to his proper deity; but which, *in reality*, imply no more, than that the *Man* Christ Jesus *was favoured with peculiar communion with God, was made the medium of a most important and gracious revelation, and was, under God, the sole agent of those miraculous interpositions, by which the truth of that revelation was established, and its spread made extensive and rapid.*
Nothing, unless iv. 2, be supposed to refer to it.	*Complete silence* as to any *superior nature;* and *great stress* laid on the fact, that Jesus was a MAN *in reality*, and not *in appearance* only.
Nothing, except a *remote* inference from the expression 'Root of David.'	*Complete silence* as to any *superior nature.* Nothing really, and very little apparently, inconsistent with the simple or proper humanity of Jesus.

On the whole; 1. The doctrine of the *Equality* of Jesus with the Father, is absolutely contradictory to many passages; it is directly opposed by a large proportion of the New Testament; and it is scarcely countenanced by any passage which is not falsely translated.—2. The doctrine of the *Proper Deity* of our Lord, is contradictory to some passages; it is inconsistent with the general tenor of the New Testament; and it is countenanced only by the usual interpretation of some passages, which are capable of a different interpretation in conformity with the express assertions of the Apostle Paul, and of our Lord himself.—3. The doctrine of the *Pre-existence* of our Lord, is inconsistent with the general tenor of the Gospel history, and with many expressions in the Epistles; and it is countenanced only by a few expressions, which are capable of a just interpretation consistent with the other parts of the New Testament.—4. The *Simple or Proper Humanity* of Jesus is a fact, because there is no adequate proof of his possessing any superior nature,—because it fully accords with the general tenor of the New Testament,—because it is inconsistent with no part of the New Testament,—and because it is the "natural and obvious meaning" of the unqualified language in which the *Evangelists*, and the *Apostles*, and *Jesus himself*, speak of him as a MAN.

CHAP. III.

Arguments derived from the New Testament at large, supporting the Unitarian Doctrine as to the Nature of our Lord.

I NOW proceed, according to my purpose before stated, to produce from the New Testament *at large* those arguments, which, in connexion with the foregoing examination of the witnesses *separately*, appear to me fully to justify the assertion, that Unitarianism is the doctrine of the Gospel.*

I.

We learn from the New Testament, *(what forms the* grand doctrine *of the* Old,)† that THERE IS

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* I shall frequently be under the necessity of quoting sentences without the connected passages. I shall endeavour to do it with a strict reference to the connection; but I must entreat those readers who may use this work as a means of knowing the truth, to refer to the N.T. itself, (and especially to the original,) in every important case. Nothing has contributed more to prevent the spread of scriptural knowledge on controverted points, than the citing of passages as though they were independent truths, without regard to their connexion, or to the general tenor of Scripture.—The italics in the *quotations* have no farther purpose, than to show what words are not in the original.—Throughout, words in brackets, are marked by Griesbach as probably to be omitted.

† Some remarks will be found in Appendix II. respecting the evidence of the Old Testament; but it will be desirable to quote here a small number of the many passages, in the Law and the Prophets, which *explicitly declare* the *absolute unity, unrivalled supremacy*, and even *exclusive godhead* of JEHOVAH. In a solemn exhortation to obedience (*Deut.* iv. 35,) Moses says, 'That thou mightest know that JEHOVAH HE is GOD, there is NONE ELSE BESIDES HIM:' and in the song of Moses, he uses these remarkable words (*Deut.* xxxii. 39,) speaking in the name of Jehovah; 'See now that I, even I, am HE, and THERE IS NO GOD WITH ME.' (See also the next note.) So in the prophecy of Isaiah, who is supposed

BUT ONE GOD, *and that* GOD IS ONE; *and farther, that He is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Mark xii. 29. 'And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments *is*, Hear, O Israel; the Lord, our God, the Lord is one:'* &c.—*V.* 33. 'And the Scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one *God*,† and there is none other but He;' &c.

John xvii. 3. Jesus Christ, in a *solemn prayer* to the FATHER, says, 'And this is life eternal, that they might know THEE, THE ONLY TRUE GOD, and him whom thou hast sent, *even* Jesus

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by most Christians to have spoken of the MAN OF SORROWS, (ch. liii. 3,) the SERVANT OF GOD, (ch. lii. 13,) as though *he* were himself the *Mighty God*, the *Everlasting Father*, (ch. ix. 6.)—we find among several others, the following explicit and decisive declarations: ch. xlv. 5, 'I am JEHOVAH, and *there is* NO GOD BESIDES ME:' and ch. xlvi. 9, 'I *am* GOD, and *there is* NONE ELSE; I *am* GOD, and *there is* NONE LIKE ME.

* These words are quoted from *Deut.* vi. 4. The literal rendering of the Hebrew is, 'Jehovah our God, Jehovah *is* one,' or 'Jehovah *is* our God; Jehovah *is* one.' The Greek, in the Septuagint, and in Mark, is Κυριος ὁ Θεος ἡμων Κυριος εἷς εστι.—If Moses had been favoured with a prophetic view of those departures from the proper unity of God, which have unhappily been so prevalent in the *Christian* world, he could not more distinctly have stated that doctrine in opposition to all others: and, indeed, considering that the words have a strength and peculiarity of expression which was in no way required in stating the unity of God in opposition to the notions of the Heathens, I cannot but regard this passage, as designed by Him by whom 'are all things,' to express the grand truth of His absolute unity, in opposition to a plurality of persons in the Godhead.

† Griesbach reads ὅτι εἷς εστι, omitting θεος upon adequate authority. With this omission the Greek should very probably be rendered, 'for He is one, and there is none other but He.' But the argument for the proper unity of God, is stronger without θεος than with it. The Scribe says, (and with the approbation of our Lord,) 'He,' that is Jehovah, 'is one.' The adjective is masculine, and can only mean one *person*, that is, *intelligent agent*.—Compare *Zech.* xiv. 9. 'And Jehovah shall be for a king over all the earth, and in that day Jehovah shall be one, and His name one.'

Christ.'*—*If the* FATHER *be the* ONLY TRUE God, *neither the* SON *nor the* HOLY GHOST *can be* the TRUE GOD. It is trifling to say, in opposition to this argument for the proper unity of God, that the expression, 'the only true God,' "is here opposed to the false gods of the Pagan worship:" it is *absolutely exclusive* of *every other* person (that is, *intelligent agent*). Till it can be proved that these words were not really uttered by the Word of God himself, I must contend that the doctrine of the *Trinity*, and even that of the *Proper Deity* of Christ, are in *direct opposition to the words of Jesus*, and are therefore *anti-christian doctrines*. On this plain, unambiguous, decisive, solemn expression of our Lord himself, I am contented to rest my faith, with full conviction, that HIS GOD AND FATHER *is the* ONLY TRUE GOD.

Rom. xvi. 27. 'To the ONLY WISE GOD *be* glory through Jesus Christ for ever. *Amen.*' See p. 45, Note †.

1 *Cor.* viii. 4—6. 'We know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that *there is* no [other] God but one. For though there be that are called Gods, whether in heaven or on earth, (as there are Gods many, and Lord's many,) yet to us there is ONE GOD, THE FATHER, from whom *are* all things, and we to him, and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom *are* all things, and

* It is my wish to abide by the Public Version in these quotations: but whenever the original may be more accurately represented, I shall without scruple follow the original. The P.V. is in every one's hands.

we through him.'—This passage appears to me an irrefragable proof, that Paul believed that one person only is God, and that person, the Father, the Father of all, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Eph. iv. 5, 6. *There is* 'one Lord, one faith, one baptism, ONE GOD AND FATHER of all, who *is* above all, and through all, and in us all.'—This passage is not equally direct as the last, but it speaks precisely the same language. See also 1 *Cor.* xii. 4—6.

1 *Tim.* i. 17. 'Now unto the king eternal, immortal, invisible, the ONLY GOD, *be* honour and glory for ever and ever. *Amen.*' (See p. 40.) —Unless it can be shown from Scripture, that the only God here spoken of, is, "God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost,† three persons and one God," I must consider it as a direct and positive proof, that the doctrine of the proper deity of our Lord, was not the doctrine of the Apostle Paul.

1 *Tim.* ii. 5. For *there is* ONE GOD and one

* See p. 37, Note *.—I may be told that when Paul says 'there is one God,' he in no way opposes the Trinitarian system, which expressly maintains the Unity of God; and that his assertions are contradictory to polytheism only: and if the Apostle had simply said, 'there is one God,' this reasoning might be admissible; but he speaks in terms which necessarily imply that Jesus is not that one God, and that the Father only is the one God. If the doctrine of a *Tri-une God* had been known in the days of the Apostles, more explicit language might have been used against it: as it is, we cannot expect to find more than we do find, language utterly inconsistent with the proper deity of the Man Christ Jesus.

† These expressions, *viz.* 'God the Son,' and 'God the Holy Ghost,' are completely unauthorized by the words of Scripture. Many of those who have long been accustomed to the Liturgy of the Church of England, may not be aware of this fact.

Mediator between God and Men, the MAN Christ Jesus.'—This sentence directly shows that the expression 'only God' in the last quotation, does not include Jesus Christ, and therefore completes the proof that the FATHER is the ONLY GOD.

Jude 25. 'To the ONLY GOD our Saviour through Jesus Christ our Lord, *be* glory and majesty,' &c.—See page 56, and the note.

Before our Saviour's time, the Unity of God was a point established among the Jews; it was the fundamental principle of their religion. How then can it be accounted for, upon the common opinions respecting the person of Christ, that statements as explicit as the above, are not to be found in the Scriptures concerning his divinity? *That the Son is one God with the Father, could be known only from a new revelation; and where is this revealed?* —We might have expected that the Apostles would, at least, never have employed expressions which, in their plain and obvious sense, are directly in opposition to such an opinion, without some qualification, or some equally strong expression in favour of it, if it had been true and a part of their Gospel.

Besides the above passages, which are selected as directly referring to the proper Unity of God, *the appellation* GOD *is used above* three hundred *times in the New Testament in connexions which necessarily confine it to the* FATHER *only.** Of these many are strikingly in opposition to the

* See these instances enumerated in Clarke's *Scripture-Doctrine of the Trinity*, Ch. I. § 2. No. 18—336.

BUT ONE GOD, *and that* GOD IS ONE; *and farther, that He is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

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* These words are quoted from *Deut.* vi. 4. The literal rendering of the Hebrew is, 'Jehovah our God, Jehovah *is* one,' or 'Jehovah *is* our God; Jehovah *is* one.' The Greek, in the Septuagint, and in Mark, is Κυριος ὁ Θεος ἡμων Κυριος εἷς εστι.—If Moses had been favoured with a prophetic view of those departures from the proper unity of God, which have unhappily been so prevalent in the *Christian* world, he could not more distinctly have stated that doctrine in opposition to all others: and, indeed, considering that the words have a strength and peculiarity of expression which was in no way required in stating the unity of God in opposition to the notions of the Heathens, I cannot but regard this passage, as designed by Him by whom 'are all things,' to express the grand truth of His absolute unity, in opposition to a plurality of persons in the Godhead.

† Griesbach reads ὅτι εἷς εστι, omitting θεος upon adequate authority. With this omission the Greek should very probably be rendered, 'for He is one, and there is none other but He.' But the argument for the proper unity of God, is stronger without θεος than with it. The Scribe says, (and with the approbation of our Lord,) 'He,' that is Jehovah, 'is one.' The adjective is masculine, and can only mean one *person*, that is, *intelligent agent*.—Compare *Zech.* xiv. 9. 'And Jehovah shall be for a king over all the earth, and in that day Jehovah shall be one, and His name one.'

Christ.'*—*If the* FATHER *be the* ONLY TRUE God, *neither the* SON *nor the* HOLY GHOST *can be* the TRUE GOD. It is trifling to say, in opposition to this argument for the proper unity of God, that the expression, 'the only true God,' "is here opposed to the false gods of the Pagan worship:" it is *absolutely exclusive* of *every other* person (that is, *intelligent agent*). Till it can be proved that these words were not really uttered by the Word of God himself, I must contend that the doctrine of the *Trinity*, and even that of the *Proper Deity* of Christ, are in *direct opposition to the words of Jesus*, and are therefore *anti-christian doctrines*. On this plain, unambiguous, decisive, solemn expression of our Lord himself, I am contented to rest my faith, with full conviction, that HIS GOD AND FATHER *is the* ONLY TRUE GOD.

Rom. xvi. 27. 'To the ONLY WISE GOD *be* glory through Jesus Christ for ever. *Amen.*' See p. 45, Note †.

1 *Cor.* viii. 4—6. 'We know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that *there is* no [other] God but one. For though there be that are called Gods, whether in heaven or on earth, (as there are Gods many, and Lord's many,) yet to us there is ONE GOD, THE FATHER, from whom *are* all things, and we to him, and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom *are* all things, and

* It is my wish to abide by the Public Version in these quotations: but whenever the original may be more accurately represented, I shall without scruple follow the original. The P.V. is in every one's hands.

we through him.'—This passage appears to me an irrefragable proof, that Paul believed that one person only is God, and that person, the Father, the Father of all, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Eph. iv. 5, 6. *There is* 'one Lord, one faith, one baptism, ONE GOD AND FATHER of all, who *is* above all, and through all, and in us all.'—This passage is not equally direct as the last, but it speaks precisely the same language. See also 1 *Cor.* xii. 4—6.

1 *Tim.* i. 17. 'Now unto the king eternal, immortal, invisible, the ONLY GOD, *be* honour and glory for ever and ever. *Amen.*' (See p. 40.) —Unless it can be shown from Scripture, that the only God here spoken of, is, "God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost,† three persons and one God," I must consider it as a direct and positive proof, that the doctrine of the proper deity of our Lord, was not the doctrine of the Apostle Paul.

1 *Tim.* ii. 5. For *there is* ONE GOD and one

* See p. 37, Note *.—I may be told that when Paul says 'there is one God,' he in no way opposes the Trinitarian system, which expressly maintains the Unity of God; and that his assertions are contradictory to polytheism only: and if the Apostle had simply said, 'there is one God,' this reasoning might be admissible; but he speaks in terms which necessarily imply that Jesus is not that one God, and that the Father only is the one God. If the doctrine of a *Tri-une God* had been known in the days of the Apostles, more explicit language might have been used against it: as it is, we cannot expect to find more than we do find, language utterly inconsistent with the proper deity of the Man Christ Jesus.

† These expressions, *viz.* 'God the Son,' and 'God the Holy Ghost,' are completely unauthorized by the words of Scripture. Many of those who have long been accustomed to the Liturgy of the Church of England, may not be aware of this fact.

Mediator between God and Men, the MAN Christ Jesus.'—This sentence directly shows that the expression 'only God' in the last quotation, does not include Jesus Christ, and therefore completes the proof that the FATHER is the ONLY GOD.

Jude 25. 'To the ONLY GOD our Saviour through Jesus Christ our Lord, *be* glory and majesty,' &c.—See page 56, and the note.

Before our Saviour's time, the Unity of God was a point established among the Jews; it was the fundamental principle of their religion. How then can it be accounted for, upon the common opinions respecting the person of Christ, that statements as explicit as the above, are not to be found in the Scriptures concerning his divinity? *That the Son is one God with the Father, could be known only from a new revelation; and where is this revealed?* —We might have expected that the Apostles would, at least, never have employed expressions which, in their plain and obvious sense, are directly in opposition to such an opinion, without some qualification, or some equally strong expression in favour of it, if it had been true and a part of their Gospel.

Besides the above passages, which are selected as directly referring to the proper Unity of God, *the appellation* GOD *is used above* three hundred *times in the New Testament in connexions which necessarily confine it to the* FATHER *only.** Of these many are strikingly in opposition to the

* See these instances enumerated in Clarke's *Scripture-Doctrine of the Trinity*, Ch. I. § 2. No. 18—336.

Trinitarian doctrine, and even to that of the proper deity of Christ; for *they show, not only that* GOD, THE GOD OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, *is a distinct being from* OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, *but also that the appellation* GOD *is* appropriate *to the* FATHER ONLY*. And I should think it must astonish any unprejudiced person, who has not before attentively considered the subject, to reflect, that *though it is only from the Christian revelation that it can be known that the* Son *is* God, *yet*, even in common estimation, *there are only about* nine *instances in which he is called* God; *that of these, there are at most, only* three

* The following are a few of those passages. *John* vi. 27. For him hath the FATHER sealed, even GOD.—Ch. vii. 16, 17. My doctrine is not mine, but His that sent me. If any man is willing to do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of MYSELF.—*Acts* ii. 32. This JESUS hath GOD raised up.—Ch. xx. 21. Repentance toward GOD, and faith toward our LORD JESUS CHRIST.—*Rom.* i. 7. Grace to you and peace from GOD OUR FATHER, and the LORD JESUS CHRIST.—Ch. xv. 6. GOD even the FATHER of our Lord Jesus Christ: (*or more literally*, the GOD and Father of our LORD JESUS CHRIST.) —1 *Cor.* iii. 23. And ye are Christ's, and CHRIST is GOD'S.—2 *Cor.* i. 3. Blessed be the GOD and Father of our LORD JESUS CHRIST. (The P.V. renders, 'God even the Father;' but in ch. xi. 31, and also in *Eph.* i. 3. 1 *Pet.* i. 3, &c., precisely the same words in the original are rendered, 'God and Father,' which assuredly is the most literal rendering.)—*Gal.* i. 3, 4. Grace be to you, and peace from GOD THE FATHER, and from our LORD JESUS CHRIST, who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from the present evil world, according to the will of OUR GOD AND FATHER.—*Eph.* i. 17. That the GOD OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.—1 *Pet.* i. 3. Blessed be the GOD and Father of our LORD JESUS CHRIST.

Passages equally to the point are of very frequent occurrence, particularly in the Epistles. With such expressions before my eyes, I feel unfeigned astonishment, that any persons deriving their faith from the New Testament, should have believed that Jesus, the Son of God, is a person (*i. e.* intelligent agent,) of one substance, power, and eternity with Him who is so often styled HIS GOD, and who is never spoken of otherwise than as a *Being* distinct from him.

in which the appellation was really *given him by the New Testament writers;* and that Moses also was called* God, *and as may reasonably be supposed, for the very same reason, viz. that to him the word of God came.*†

II.

We learn from the New Testament that the GOD AND FATHER OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, *is* ALONE *possessed of the* ESSENTIAL *attributes of* DIVINITY, *and that to* HIM ALONE RELIGIOUS WORSHIP IS DUE.

Mark x. 18. 'And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? *there is* NONE GOOD BUT ONE, *that is* GOD.

Acts iv. 24. 'They lifted up their voice to GOD with one consent, and said, O sovereign Lord, thou *art* God, who madest heaven and earth and the sea, and all that is in them.' That the Being here addressed is the Father, see *v.* 27; in which the Apostles use the expression 'thy holy servant Jesus.' See *Arg.* VIII.

Acts xiv. 15. 'The LIVING GOD, who made heaven and earth and the sea, and all things that are therein.'

Rom. i. 23. 'The glory of the INCORRUPTIBLE GOD.'

Rom. xvi. 25, 26. 'According to the commandment of the EVERLASTING GOD.'

2 *Cor.* vi. 18. 'saith the LORD ALMIGHTY.'

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* See Chap. VI. § 1. at the end.
† John x. 34, 35. See page 62, Note (*).

1 *Tim.* i. 17. 'The King ETERNAL, IMMORTAL, INVISIBLE.

1 *Tim.* vi. 15, 16. 'THE BLESSED AND ONLY POTENTATE, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, WHO ONLY HATH IMMORTALITY, dwelling in that light which none can approach unto, WHOM NO MAN HATH SEEN, OR CAN SEE; to whom *be* everlasting honour and dominion. Amen.'*

Rev. i. 8. 'I am Alpha and Omega, saith the Lord God, WHO IS, AND WHO WAS, AND WHO IS TO COME, the ALMIGHTY.'†

These passages are sufficient to prove the *first* part of my assertion: if any think the contrary, I refer him with full confidence to Dr. Clarke's

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* Owing to the ambiguity of the common translation of the first clause of *v.* 15, many have supposed that our Lord Jesus Christ is the person referred to, in this noble passage. Respecting this supposition it may be observed, 1. The Greek will scarcely, if at all, allow of this reference; for the literal English is, 'which in its proper season the blessed and only Potentate will shew.' If the reference be to Jesus, it proves too much, *viz.* that he is the *only* Potentate, that he ONLY hath immortality. To suppose such a reference is to make the Apostle absolutely contradict himself, even in this very Epistle; see ch. ii. 5. i. 17.

I have added this note, in consequence of having observed that in a recent collection of texts, respecting the duties and doctrines of Revelation, this passage is inserted in a section entitled, 'Of the Nature, Authority, and Power of Christ,' and the quotation begins, 'He is the blessed and only Potentate.' See *Economy of a Christian Life*, by the Rev. W. Bingley, A.M. F.L.S. 1808.—If the Author should see this note, I earnestly wish that it may induce him to observe the connexion more attentively in this and several other passages. Here, a direct proof that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ is the only God, is converted into a proof that Jesus Christ himself is the only God.—In one of the Collections of Texts issued by the Moravians, this text is placed under the head of the Lord Jesus Christ; and begins thus, "He is the blessed and only Potentate," &c. What a careless perversion of Scripture!

† This is Griesbach's reading, adopted by Archdeacon Woodhouse; and that it is the true reading, the critical reader must be convinced if he examine the evidence produced in Griesbach's note.

Scripture-Doctrine of the Trinity, ch. I. § 3, where they will find upwards of one hundred passages from the New Testament, in which the Father 'is styled God, with some peculiar high titles, epithets, or attributes, which, though most of them indeed are not absolutely incommunicable, yet in the New Testament are (generally, if not) always, by way of supreme eminency, ascribed to the person of the Father only."—Now, all that can be derived from these passages with respect to God, (I mean the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,) might have been derived with equal force from the Old Testament; but since little could be learnt from the Old Testament respecting the *nature* of Jesus Christ,* is it not reasonable to expect that if he really were himself the very and eternal God, of one substance, power, and eternity with the Father, such facts, such attributes, would be declared as *clearly*, as *expressly*, and as *frequently*, as what we actually find respecting the Father? When we examine the Scriptures we find that the matter of fact is directly contrary to this. I seriously believe that were I convinced that the doctrines respecting the nature of Jesus which I now oppose as unscriptural, were really the doctrines of the Gospel, I should feel obliged

* And that little is decidedly opposed to the prevalent opinion as to the person of Christ. Moses speaks of him as a prophet *like unto himself*; (Deut. xviii. 15.) Isaiah speaks of him as a *Man of sorrows*; and if the common translation of ix. 6, were correct and necessary, he only says that *he shall be called* the mighty God, &c. See, however, Appendix II.

to confess, that they are *seldom* brought into view, and then, *obscurely* and *indirectly*.—But to proceed with the *second* part of my position, that *to the Father alone religious worship is due.*

I infer this from the directions of our Saviour himself, who has given us a model of prayer, which alas, has not contented his disciples;—who never said any thing which can justify the belief that he authorized the worship of *any other* being than Him to whom he there directs us to pray, THE FATHER;—and who himself prayed to the Father, and to no other.* I might rest the whole upon this argument; for I cannot hesitate in this belief, that if any Apostle had taught, or any disciple had conformed to, a different practice, it would have been without authority of him who said, 'After this manner pray ye, Our Father who art in heaven.' In fact, however, we have no instance in the New Testament in which *supplication* is made to Jesus when not *sensibly* present to the disciple; and all the prayers which are recorded, are addressed

* It has been said that Jesus could not pray to himself. If he could not, yet (if the doctrine of the Trinity were true) he could have prayed to the Holy Spirit: but why could not his *human nature* pray to his *divine nature?* It appears to me quite as reasonable, as to suppose that his human nature did not know what his divine nature did. I am aware of the unmeaningness of this phraseology, but we are obliged to employ it, by the use made of it by our opponents. The fact is well stated by H. Taylor (in his *Considerations* p. 51.) "Neither the *human* NATURE, nor the *divine* NATURE, can "know any thing: whatever is known is known by a PERSON, and "whatever is done is done by a PERSON. NATURE is neither AGENT "nor PATIENT. Whatever Dr. Randolph imagines to be done by "the HUMANITY or DIVINITY of Christ, was done by neither; but "by *Christ himself.*"

to the Father of all. I shall now adduce a few of the many passages which might be brought forward in corroboration of these remarks, and in my next Part, (see Ch. VI. § 5,) I shall consider those which appear to oppose them."*

Matt. iv. 10. 'It is written,' says our Lord himself, 'Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and HIM ONLY shalt thou serve;' αυτῳ μονῳ λατρευσεις. TO HIM ONLY SHALT THOU PAY RELIGIOUS SERVICE. The verb λατρευω is used twenty-one times in the New Testament, (and *always* in the sense of religious service;) but never once in reference to Jesus Christ.

John iv. 23, 24. 'But the hour cometh, (and now it is,) when the true worshippers shall worship the FATHER in spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship Him. GOD *is* a spirit, and they that worship Him, must worship *Him* in spirit and in truth.†—Serious

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* In consequence of a Discourse by the Rev. Dr. Pye Smith, on *the Adoration of the Lord Jesus Christ*, I was led to state, in a separate and perhaps more complete form, the evidence for the Absolute Unity and Exclusive Worship of Jehovah, in a Tract entitled *Proof from Scripture that the Father is the only true God and the only Proper Object of Religious Worship;* to which I beg to refer the Reader who wishes for further information.

† "It is not a little remarkable, that our great Master, who, in subsequent ages, became himself an object of worship among his professed followers, should in this passage exclusively describe the worshippers of the Father as the true worshippers, making it an indispensable criterion of true worship, not only that it should be in spirit and in truth, but also that it be offered unto the only proper object of adoration, to his Father and our Father, to his God and our God." See *Christian Unitarianism Vindicated*, by Verax, p. 21.—I have only recently met with this work; and know nothing of the author or his opponents; but it appears to me to contain many acute and just observations connected with his title; and that he has proved one of his leading positions, which is little known, *viz.* that the

and sincere Trinitarian worshippers will be accepted for the *spirit* of their devotions; but not for the *object* of them, when inconsistent with this direction.

John xvi. 23. 'In that day ye shall ask ME nothing.' 'Whatsoever ye shall ask the FATHER in my name, He will give it you.'

Rom. i. 9. 'For GOD is my witness, whom I serve (λατρευω) with my spirit in the gospel of his Son.'

Rom. xv. 30. 'Now I beseech you brethren, by the LORD JESUS CHRIST, and by the love of the spirit,' *i.e.* the love which is the fruit of the spirit, 'that ye strive together with me in your PRAYERS to GOD for me.'

Phil. iii. 3. 'Who WORSHIP (λατρευοντες) GOD with our spirit, and GLORY in CHRIST JESUS.'

Phil. iv. 6, 7. 'In every thing, by PRAYER, and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, will keep your hearts and minds through εν CHRIST JESUS.'

If it could be proved that Jesus Christ is the very and eternal God, it would follow that he also is a proper object of religious worship; but let it not be said, that the Scriptures authorize us

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early Friends were decided (though I think not always very consistent) believers in the proper unity and free mercy of God, in opposition to the doctrines of the Trinity and satisfaction.—Since this note was written, I have learnt that the volume in question is ascribed to Thomas Foster.– N.B. This able and intelligent man was at last (in 1812) disowned for his heresy by the Society of Friends.

either by *precept* or *example* to pray to him. Let this practice be acknowledged to stand upon its only basis, that of inference from his proper deity; and let it also be considered, that since the Father only is represented in the Scriptures as the object of religious worship, it is, from that circumstance alone, at least highly probable that the Father is the only God. If Jesus had been what he is represented to have been in the thirty-nine Articles, the worship spoken of in the Scriptures would undoubtedly have resembled that of the Church of England, and we should somewhere or other have found such expressions as these, "We therefore pray thee help thy servants whom thou hast redeemed with thy precious blood;"—"O Lord Jesu Christ—Grant that the ministers and stewards of thy mysteries, may likewise so prepare," &c.—This is truly *prayer;* but is there any thing in the New Testament resembling this?

III.

Jesus Christ never said that he himself was God, but on the contrary, spoke of the FATHER *who sent him as* GOD, *and as the* ONLY GOD; *and without guard or comment called* HIMSELF *a* MAN.

John v. 44. 'And seek not the honour that *cometh* from the ONLY GOD,' παρα του μονου Θεου.

John viii. 40. 'But now ye seek to kill ME, a MAN who have told you the truth, which I have heard from God.' *Ver.* 42. If GOD were your Father, you would love ME, for I came forth

from GOD, and am come *unto you;* for I came not OF MYSELF, but HE SENT ME.—See also § IV.

John xvii. 3. 'That they may know thee, the ONLY TRUE GOD, and him whom thou hast sent, *even* Jesus Christ.' See p. 94.

John xx. 17. 'I ascend to my Father and your Father, to MY GOD AND YOUR God.'

Rev. iii. 12. 'I will write upon him the name of MY GOD, and the name of the city of MY GOD,' &c. See p. 81.

The attentive reader of John's Gospel, will find many other instances in which Jesus applies the appellation *God* to Him who sent him, and in every case without the slightest intimation that any other *person* (*i.e.* intelligent agent,) was also God.

IV.

Jesus habitually prayed *to the* FATHER, *referred to the* agency of the FATHER *all that distinguished him as the Son of God, and in other instances expressly spoke of* his *own* inferiority *to the* FATHER.

"We may observe him," says Archbishop Newcome,* "referring every thing to his Fa-"ther, his mission, his doctrine, his mighty "works, all his actions, his sufferings, his resur-

* See the highly valuable work of this eminent Prelate, entitled, *Observations on our Lord's Conduct as a Divine Instructor; and on the Excellence of his Moral Character.* Part II. ch. i. § 1. The whole of the volume is deserving the serious attention of every one who desires to be a disciple of Jesus in spirit and in practice. The section to which I have referred (on our Lord's Piety,) cannot be read by any one possessed of religious feeling, without deep interest.

" rection.* It was the whole bent of his mind, " his labour, and his delight, ' his meat' and " drink, ' to do the will of him that sent him.'† " God was in all his thoughts."

It can scarcely be necessary to adduce proofs of what every thoughtful reader of the Gospels must know to be true; but the citing of a small number of the more striking passages may be desirable.

Matt. xx. 23. ' To sit on my right hand and on [my] left, is not MINE to give but *to those* for whom it hath been prepared by MY FATHER.'

Matt. xxvi. 39. ' And he went forwards a little, and FELL ON HIS FACE, and PRAYED, saying, O my FATHER, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, NOT AS I WILL, BUT AS THOU WILT.'

Matt. xxvii. 46. ' MY GOD, MY GOD, why hast thou forsaken me.'

Matt. xxviii. 18. ' All power, (*or* authority,) has been GIVEN unto me in heaven and on earth.'

Mark xiii. 32. ' But of that day and hour knoweth NO ONE, (neither the angels who are in heaven, NOR THE SON,) BUT THE FATHER.'‡

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* See *John* v. 30. vii. 28. Ch. vii. 16. viii. 28. Ch. xvi. 10. Ch. v. 19. Ch. xiv. 31. Ch. x. 18.

† *John* iv. 34.

‡ On this passage, see Henry Taylor's *Considerations on Ancient and Modern Creeds compared*, p. 43—56. The following passage peculiarly deserves the attention of the reader.

" Dr. Lightfoot observes that, ' Christ as the second Person of the Trinity, knew the day; and to say otherwise, is blasphemous; [*bona verba quæso*]; but to say the Messiah knew it not, who nevertheless was the same with the Second Person of the Trinity, is not blasphemous.' And Burkitt talks in the same way.—But

John iv. 34. 'My meat is to do the will of HIM WHO SENT ME, and to finish HIS work.

John v. 26, 27. 'For as the Father hath life in himself, so He hath GIVEN to the Son also to have life in himself; and He hath GIVEN HIM AUTHORITY to execute judgment also, because he is a SON OF MAN that is, *a proper human being*.* *Ver.* 30. I CAN OF MY OWN SELF DO

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what shall we say of the Evangelist, or rather of Christ himself, who by using the word ουδεις, NO ONE, excludes them both?—I shall not inquire whether it be blasphemy, to say, the Messiah knew it not; because it is not said of the Messiah, but of the Son; and he is allowed, by Dr. Lightfoot, to be the Second Person of the Trinity, in the beginning of the argument. But, is not this to say the Second Person of the Trinity *did* know it, and, at the same time, *did not* know it? And, if a Deist were to argue in this manner, should we not call it shuffling? Can King George *know a thing*, as King of England, and, *be ignorant of it*, as Elector of Hanover, till it be revealed to him *by* the King of England, who is the *same* Elector of Hanover *to whom* he reveals it? Is not this revealing it to himself, who *knew* it *before;* and is not this mere sophistry? *ludere cum sacris?* When any one is spoken of *personally*, there is no room for such evasions; though he had a thousand different *offices:* the office makes no alteration in the person."

* I am now satisfied, that by the remarkable words ὅτι υἱος ανθωπου εστι, our Lord is to be understood as declaring, that he was appointed to his high office of Judge of all mankind because he is a proper human being. Our Lord often used the appellation *the Son of Man;* but, except in the present instance, it is *always* with the article prefixed to both words ὁ υἱος του ανθρωπου. Dr. Middleton's remarks deserve consideration. His work on the Greek article is valuable as a repository of *phenomena;* but his theory is obscure, unfounded, and useless; and it has often, in connexion with his theological opinions, given so obvious a bias to his assertions and arguments, that they can seldom be received as authority. In the present instance he argues, that υἱος should be without the article, because it is the predicate of a proposition; and that ανθρωπος must then be without it too: but he has himself, (p. 64.) furnished a sufficient argument on the other side; *viz.* "we sometimes find that the predicate after ειμι has the article, where the subject is a pronoun personal or demonstrative." I presume that he would not infer any thing from the ellipsis of the subject in this and other instances—On the appellation as commonly employed by our Lord, I refer the reader with peculiar satisfaction to a Discourse by

NOTHING: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just, BECAUSE I seek not my own will, but the will of Him who sent me.'

John vii. 16. 'My DOCTRINE is not MINE, but HIS THAT SENT ME.' So ch. xii. 49. 'For I have not spoken OF MYSELF, but the FATHER WHO SENT ME, HE GAVE ME A COMMANDMENT what I should say, and what I should speak.'

John xiv. 10. 'The FATHER who dwelleth in me, HE doeth the works.' *Ver.* 28. 'If ye loved me, ye would rejoice because I said, I go unto the Father, for MY FATHER is GREATER THAN I.

V.

Jesus lived *and* died *as a* MAN, *possessing* human *feelings and affections, and subject to* human *wants and sufferings.*

I do not know that it can be thought necessary to prove this; and indeed it can scarcely be completely done by detached sentences. The whole Gospels may be confidently appealed to as a proof. I shall however quote a few passages from them which will illustrate the above position.

John iv. 6. 'Being WEARIED with his journey.' *Luke* iv. 1, 2. Jesus 'was led by the spirit into the wilderness, being forty days TEMPTED by the devil. And in those days he ate nothing; and when they were ended, he afterwards HUNGERED.' *John* xi. 5. 'Now Jesus

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Mr. Aspland, entitled *An Attempt to ascertain the Import of the Title* SON OF MAN, 1831.

LOVED Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus.' —*Ver.* 35. 'Jesus WEPT,' Mark iii. 5. 'And when he had looked round on them with ANGER, being GRIEVED for the hardness of their hearts.' *Luke* x. 21. 'In that hour Jesus REJOICED in spirit.' *John* xii. 27. 'Now is my soul TROUBLED.' *Matt.* xxvi. 37, 38. 'And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be SORROWFUL, and FULL of ANGUISH. Then saith he unto them, MY SOUL IS EXCEEDING SORROWFUL, EVEN UNTO DEATH, tarry ye here and watch with me.' *Luke* xxii. 44. 'And being in AN AGONY he prayed more earnestly.' *Mark* xv. 37. 'And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and EXPIRED.' *John* xix. 42. 'There laid they Jesus.'

VI.

During his ministry *on earth, he was considered and treated as a* MAN *(in the usual sense of the term); and this not only by the* people at large, *but by his* disciples.

Here again I must refer to the whole of the Gospel-history; and I should suppose that no one can hesitate, except from the conclusions which follow from it, to admit the truth of this position. After the most striking displays of our Lord's miraculous powers, *after those discourses in which he is generally supposed to have spoken of his pre-existence and personal divinity*, the *people* regarded him as a MAN, and his *disciples* obviously viewed him as they had done before, as a MAN, *though the Christ, the Son of God.*—A few

passages I shall select to illustrate the assertion which I have made, but the proof of it rests upon the whole narratives of the Evangelists.

The Baptist (*John* i. 30,) speaks of his successor and superior as a MAN. When our Lord had led the woman of Samaria to the conviction that he was the Christ, she said to her townspeople (*John* iv. 29,) 'Come, see a man who hath told me all things that ever I did.' After Jesus had publicly manifested his miraculous powers at Jerusalem (*John* v.), his manner of teaching (during the Feast of Tabernacles) excited this remark from the messengers of the Pharisees, 'Never man spake like this MAN.'* In his subsequent discourses he called himself a MAN, as we have already seen § III. After he had restored sight to a blind man (*John* ix.) we find the poor man saying *v.* 11. 'A MAN called Jesus opened my eyes.'† When he had in the most striking manner cured the paralytic, the people wondered (*Matt.* ix. 8,) 'and glorified GOD who had given such power unto MEN.' When he raised the widow's son at Nain, (*Luke* vii. 16,) the spectators 'glorified

* *John* vii. 46. The words ὡς ουτος ο ανθρωπος are marked by Griesbach as *somewhat* doubtful. If they were omitted, the sense would be different, and, in one point of view, contrary: 'Never man spake thus.'

† In this chapter four instances occur in which Jesus is called *Man* (ανθρωπος) and in the Gospel of John alone, he is called Man seventeen times, *viz.* fifteen times ανθρωπος, once ανηρ, and once σαρξ. To me it appears almost incredible, that a disciple believing in the proper divinity, or even in the pre-existence of Jesus, should thus unhesitatingly use these appellations respecting him, and give no clear indication of his own opinion that he was *not* truly and properly a man.

Phil. ii. 9—11. 'Wherefore' (on account of his humility and obedience,) 'GOD also hath HIGHLY EXALTED him, and BESTOWED on him a name which is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow of beings in heaven and on earth and under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that JESUS CHRIST is LORD to the GLORY of GOD THE FATHER.

VIII.

After *this exaltation, and* after *the Apostles had received the holy spirit, they speak of Jesus as having received his powers from* GOD, *and as the* SERVANT OF GOD, *and they speak of him as* MAN *without guard or comment: Paul even* reasons *from his being* MAN, *without giving any intimation that he was possessed of any superior nature.—On the other hand, the Apostles* never *reason from his being God, and there is only one clear instance in which an* Apostle *gives him the appellation God.* (See p. 62.)

Acts ii. 22. 'Jesus of Nazareth, a MAN FROM GOD pointed out* among you by miracles and wonders and signs which GOD DID BY HIM in the midst of you.'

Acts iii. 13. 'The GOD of our Fathers hath glorified his SERVANT (παιδα) Jesus.' *Ver.* 26. 'Unto you first, GOD, having raised up his

* This I apprehend to be the correct translation of ανδρα απο του Θεου αποδεδειγμενον εις ὑμας. The very general if not universal use of απο by Luke, is the ground of my preference of this rendering to any which requires απο to be used in the sense of *by:* but I lay *no* stress upon it in a doctrinal point of view.

SERVANT Jesus, SENT him to bless you by turning every one of you from his iniquities.' Ch. iv. 27. 'For of a truth against thy HOLY SERVANT JESUS, WHOM THOU HAST ANOINTED.' *Ver.* 29, 30. 'And give to thy servants (δουλοις) that with all boldness they may speak thy word, by stretching forth thy hand to heal, and by signs and wonders being done through the name of thy holy SERVANT Jesus.'*

Acts xvii. 31. 'Because he hath fixed a day, in which HE will judge the world in righteousness by the MAN whom he hath APPOINTED, *whereof* He hath given assurance unto all *men*, in that He hath raised him from the dead.'

Rom. v. 15. 'One MAN, Jesus Christ.' See the argument from this passage in p. 44.

1 *Cor.* xv. 21. 'For since by man *came* death, by MAN also *cometh* the resurrection of the dead.' See p. 38. *Ver.* 47. 'The second MAN *will be* [the Lord] from heaven.' See Chap. VII.

1 *Tim.* ii. 5. 'The MAN Christ Jesus.' See § 1. p. 96.

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* I think that a decided preference should be given to this translation *παις (child* or *servant)* in reference to our Saviour, for the following reasons. (1) If the Apostle meant by it the same as *υιος*, no reason appears for his not using the more customary term, *viz. υιος*, which is continually employed in reference to Jesus. (2) In *all* the instances in which the word is used in the N.T. it has no necessary connexion with the *filial relation*, but refers to the *age* or *condition* of the individual. (3) In the writings of Luke, (who uses it eleven times, besides the cases in question,) it uniformly signifies either *servant* or *young person*. (4) In the very same prayer of the Apostles (*Acts* iv. 24—30,) in which they twice use the term in reference to Jesus, they employ it in reference to David, where the common version has *servant, viz. v.* 25, *of thy servant David*, Δαβιδ του παιδος σου. And, (5) in *Matt.* xii. 18, the common version translates it *servant* in reference to *Jesus himself*: Ιδου ὁ παις μου, Behold my servant, whom I have chosen.

That the New Testament Writers, without referring to any superior nature, reason from our Lord's being man, see *Rom.* v. 1 *Cor.* xv. *Gal.* iv. 4. *Heb.* ii. iii. v. &c. and some remarks already made on this point, p. 34, 47, 52, and particularly p. 38.

It deserves attention in this connexion, that it could not be an object of revelation, that Jesus was truly and properly a *man;* but that he was *more* as to *nature*, could not be known *without* revelation. Might we not then reasonably expect to find that he is expressly and plainly called *God* at least as frequently as he is expressly and plainly called *Man*, if he were truly and properly God as well as truly and properly Man? and that those facts which respect his *divine nature* should be brought into view as frequently and explicitly as those facts which respect his *human* nature only? Now few probably will deny, that compared with the general tenor of the New Testament, (which respects his humanity only,) there is but a very small part, which, even in appearance, refers to the supposed deity of our Saviour. Yet if he were truly and properly God, it must surely be of high importance that the fact should be distinctly revealed. And I cannot myself perceive the possibility of its having been distinctly revealed, and yet that such little notice of it should be taken by the Apostles and Evangelists. At any rate, even supposing that the evidence adduced for the proper deity of Christ were adequate to prove the point, yet, if

we confine ourselves to *scriptural* views, I regard it as indisputable, that the *divine authority* of Jesus, (the fact that he was sent by God and acted under his authority,) is infinitely the most important circumstance in the Christian system. —I know not how the believer in the proper deity of Christ reconciles himself to these and many other *scriptural* difficulties with which his system is loaded: to me it appears that if that system be true, the simplicity which is in Christ is totally lost, and a veil of mystery thrown over the plainest assertions and the plainest facts. I shall only add,

IX.

The example of Jesus, (which is of the most interesting and engaging kind, peculiarly calculated to affect the heart of his disciple, and to excite to the imitation of him,) consists of HUMAN *excellencies; and its essential and* CHARACTERISTIC *value depends upon his having been truly and properly* MAN.

We are exhorted to cultivate holiness in heart and life, because God is holy: to exercise unlimited benevolence, because HIS benevolence is unlimited:* to be merciful because HE is merciful:—but are we ever exhorted to learn of GOD because HE is *meek* and *humble in heart;* to *follow in* HIS *steps*, because HE *did no sin*, neither

* *Matt.* v. 48. 'Be ye therefore perfect (τελειοι), as your Father that is in heaven is perfect.'—The connexion requires the sense here given. The word obviously does not refer to perfection in the abstract, but completeness, universality, in benevolence.

was *guile found in his mouth;* to imitate HIS *self-denying benevolence*, because, though rich, for our sakes HE was poor? Though I am willing to admit, that the condescension and benevolence of the Son of God may operate as a strong motive to humility and benevolence, even when he is at the time thought of as God,—though I am convinced that thousands and ten-thousands of those who have departed from what I believe to be Gospel-truth as to his *nature*, have been most fully influenced by his example, (the natural consequences of their *system* having completely given way to the plain teachings of the *Scriptures*,)—yet I regard it as a self-evident truth, that to enable any one to set an example of HUMAN virtues, he must be a HUMAN being; and farther, that to make that example *complete*, as an object of our imitation, and, particularly, as an *influencing cause* of such imitation, he must be, as to *nature*, in the same circumstances with ourselves, liable to suffering, liable to sin.

That our Lord was *liable* to *sin*, I consider as necessarily following from the representations of the New Testament. Unless he were so, he could not have been *tempted;* for if, by any necessity of his nature, or by the superiority of his nature, he could not sin, no inducement to sin could be felt; in other words, temptation would be but a name. Now upon the supposition of his being properly God, surely no one will venture to assert that he could sin, or even that he could feel any inducement to sin: and if he could not,

the language of Scripture is involved in mystery. and as it appears to me in contradiction. We learn* that 'he was in the desert forty days TEMPTED by Satan;' that† 'when the devil had ended all the TEMPTATION, he departed from him for a season;' from his language to his disciples, &c.‡ in Gethsemane, we perceive that he then again experienced temptation; and by the Writer to the Hebrews we are informed,§ that he 'was in ALL points TEMPTED like as we are, yet without sin.'

That profound *submissive resignation* to the will of God, which constitutes the commanding excellence of our Lord's character, (and which, according to the Writer to the Hebrews, ch. v. 8. he *learnt* by suffering,) seems to me a mere name, if he were by *nature* above the reach of sufferings, or of temptations to escape the painful duties assigned him. His ardent piety, his constant devotedness to the purposes of his Father, must, indeed, taken even in the abstract, ever animate and delight the heart in which there is one spark of devotional feeling; but if he were truly and properly God, what becomes of the *influence* of his example in this important point of view? The moment the thought presented itself, that we were contemplating the *piety* of GOD, the *resignation* of GOD, the *devotion* of GOD, it must surely annihilate such influence, or at least involve the mind in

* *Mark* i. 13.
† *Luke* iv. 13.
‡ *Luke* xxii. 40, 46, 53.
§ Ch. iv. 15.

more than Egyptian darkness. *Devotion, resignation*, and *obedience*, as exhibited in the holy character of Jesus, are *human* excellencies; as manifested by him, they imply that he was as to *nature* in *all* points like his brethren; and if we suppose that he was not so, we may contemplate those excellencies as a *model* by which to mould our affections, we may be actuated by them as a *motive*, (since it is *necessary* for us to regulate our hearts by the spirit of Jesus): but that almost undefinable *influence* which arises from the perhaps indistinct consciousness that the example which we copy was an example of feelings, of affections, like *our own* in their *purest* forms, that the distresses of Jesus were such as *we* also should have felt in such circumstances, and his resignation, too, such as in our best moments has spread tranquillity over *our own* souls, —this can have place only where the supposed divinity of our Lord's nature is unthought of, and the heart surrenders itself up to the contemplation of the MAN of Nazareth, as his character is so inimitably portrayed in the simple narratives of the Evangelists.

I should dwell on this topic with great pleasure, if my plan were less limited; as it is, I must content myself with remarking, that similar observations might be made respecting the other peculiarly *human* virtues of our Saviour. We regard him as an admirable pattern of *self-denial*, of *humility*, of *patience*, of *meekness*, of *fortitude*, of *prudence*, &c.; but to me it appears, that the

influence of these virtues must be totally overcome by a *present* conviction that he was truly and properly God.

In one point of view, it may be thought that the advocates for a superior nature in our Lord have decidedly the advantage over us: 'He left,' they may say, 'a most glorious and happy state, and partook of human feelings and sufferings. Herein indeed was love.' When we examine somewhat more accurately, we shall find that the advantage is still decidedly in *our* favour. I suppose that no advocate for the proper deity of our Saviour will venture to maintain, that the divine nature partook of these sufferings; and if not, the *being* who had before existed in glory and happiness, underwent no suffering, and the *man* Christ Jesus must surely have received support and a diminution of suffering from his union with the divine nature.—If instead of this mysterious system of a two-fold nature, we suppose that the pre-existent being *became* man,—if he retained the consciousness of the past, and a clear prospect of the future, is it conceivable that this should not have most materially lessened his human sufferings, and annihilated distress of mind? Those whose minds have by long discipline and suffering, acquired that degree of comprehensiveness, which is attainable even in this present state, have been known to *lose* the present in the contemplation of the future; and is it conceivable that a more exalted being than man, should in this respect be less perfect?—To

the divine mind, the past and the future must be equally and for ever present;—could a being partaking of the essential attributes of divinity suffer at all?—If then the sufferings undergone by our Saviour be made the criterion of his love to men, our system has in this point, as in every other respecting his example, the most decided advantage. It was the MAN Christ Jesus who suffered and died for us; and his sufferings as man could scarcely have been what from the Scriptures we suppose them to have been, if he were not simply a man, if he were supported by a union with a nature incapable of suffering,—or were a being whose nature was greatly superior to that of man.

Feeling the firmest conviction that the proper unity and unrivalled supremacy of God, the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, is the doctrine of the Gospel,—and that it is a position fully authorized by the general tenor of the New Testament, and by express and decisive facts, that this illustrious Revealer of the gracious purposes of God to Men, was truly and properly a MAN, and as to *nature* no more,—unless clear and adequate evidence can be adduced that he was a Being of a superior *nature*, I consider myself as completely justified in asserting, that 'Unitarianism is the doctrine of the Gospel.'—That the evidence which is adduced to overthrow the doctrines of the proper unity of God, and the proper or simple humanity of Jesus, is totally inadequate, I shall endeavour to show in the next Part.

PART II.

EXAMINATION OF THE EVIDENCE DERIVED FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT, AGAINST THE UNITARIAN DOCTRINE AS TO THE NATURE OF JESUS.

CHAP. IV.

Principles of Interpretation.

I FEEL the hope that a careful perusal of the preceding chapters, will have enabled my readers to judge more correctly than they otherwise might, respecting the contents of this. Our interpretations of the controverted passages, are usually considered separately from the foundation of them; and it is partly owing to this circumstance that they are so often regarded, even by persons of great candour and judgment, as far-fetched and groundless. But the grand cause assuredly is, that attachment to pre-formed opinions, which necessarily arises from long regarding them, and reasoning from them, as true, and especially from the connexion existing *in the mind*, between them and others of indisputable truth and supreme importance. I by no means intend to affirm, that there are no instances in

which the interpretations advanced by Unitarians have been far-fetched and groundless; but merely state the cause why they are in general regarded in that light by persons who widely differ from us in their religious opinions.

No one who has attentively observed the processes of the human mind can be ignorant, that, in order to produce the *ready* reception of any truth, it must accord with our habitual modes of thinking and pre-formed opinions; and that unless there is such accordance, even strong and decisive evidence is insufficient to produce *at once* a lively conviction of the understanding, though it may produce a speculative assent to the position in question. If not only the position itself, but the modes of reasoning by which it is proved to be true, do not accord with the opinions and mental habits of the individual, a truth which to some may appear self-evident, will, in such a case, be rejected as obviously false. These are things which are open to common observation; and those who are sincerely desirous of arriving at Gospel-truth, must endeavour to check the long-established biasses of the mind; they must allow themselves to examine important positions, which at first sight they might be tempted at once to reject, with a disposition to yield to the evidence which may be adduced for them; and they must suspend their decisions till the first impulses of surprise and of dissatisfaction have lost their influence on the mind. Every *Searcher* after the truth as it is in Jesus must

have experienced, with how much dissatisfaction an interpretation, new in his own mind, is sometimes viewed, (even though sanctioned by great appearance of evidence,) till he has become somewhat familiar with it; till he has observed it in its various bearings and tendencies, and considered its connexion with other established truths: and few who really yield up their minds to the honest search after truth can be ignorant, that opinions which they now regard as important and certainly true, they once were ready to reject, at first sight, as injurious and unfounded in revelation; and that interpretations which they now regard as obvious and natural, once appeared to them forced, far-fetched, and in every respect unsatisfactory. As these things are facts which necessarily arise from the structure of the mind, it becomes every lover of Christian truth to be slow in rejecting important positions which may not accord with his own preformed opinions; and to be honest in the examination of the evidence produced for them.

Still however there must be some satisfactory principles, by which our examination into Christian truth should ever be directed, and which will then serve to obviate, and even to prevent, the ill effects of custom and authority in checking or misguiding our inquiries. The following appear to me to be indisputable; and I feel a lively conviction, that when Christians in general faithfully abide by such rules and their necessary consequences, in studying the truths of their

religion, Christians in general will agree in the essential purport of those truths.

1. Revealed truth can be found ONLY in the records of Revelation contained in the Scriptures.*

2. Revealed truths can never be *inconsistent* with the general tenor of the Scriptures, with each other, or with any truths which can be *proved* from the light of reason.

3. In interpreting the Scriptures, that meaning which would be plain and obvious to those for whom the particular parts were written, or to whom they were addressed, is to be preferred, unless it can be shown that this was not the meaning of the writer or speaker.†

4. To gain a right understanding of any author, "we must carefully observe the end or design with which he wrote, and the means which he has employed for the accomplishment of his end."‡

5. The opinions of the writer or speaker, are to be determined,—not by any detached expressions, which (owing to the imperfection of language) are, in themselves considered, ambiguous,

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* What is required for any doctrine to be received as Christian doctrine, or part of the system of truths revealed by Jesus Christ, is stated in p. 2.

† "In interpreting very many phrases and histories of the N.T., it is not so much worth what we think of them from notions of our own, feigned upon I know not what grounds; as in what sense these things were understood by the hearers and lookers on, according to the usual custom and vulgar dialect of the nation." *Lightfoot's Works*, vol. ii. p. 158.

‡ See Mr. Veysie's Second Letter, p. 41.

—but by the *general tenor* of his writings or discourses.

6. Expressions which, in their particular connexion, at least, are obscure, or which are capable of different interpretations, must be explained by corresponding expressions (of the same individual, or of others using a similar style,) which are plain and unambiguous.

7. No meaning of any word or phrase can be the just one, which does not suit the connexion, or which is inconsistent with the general tenor of the individual's own writings or discourses.

8. That meaning of a word in which it is commonly used by the individual, or by others using a similar style, is to be preferred, wherever the connexion, or the general tenor of his writings and discourses, will allow of it.

9. Where a passage in the New Testament admits of different interpretations, and there is nothing in the individual's own discourses or writings to decide which is the true one, that should be preferred which best accords with the general tenor and spirit of the New Testament at large.

In these principles, considered in the abstract, I should suppose that most reasoners will readily agree. I cannot expect a similar agreement as to my deductions from them; but it is one grand point gained, when we can fix upon any common principles of reasoning; and I am fully content, whatever be the result, that every

explanation of Scripture in these sheets, should be tried by those which I have advanced.

I consider myself as being authorized, by the foregoing examination of the books of the New Testament, separately and as a whole, to affirm, that the doctrines of the proper unity of God, and the proper humanity of Jesus, are accordant with the general tenor and spirit of the New Testament; and that no opposing doctrines are. If, in addition to this, it appear that those few passages which seem to *teach* doctrines which oppose Unitarianism, (as well as those which are supposed to *imply* such doctrines without directly teaching them,*) do admit of a fair interpretation, suitable to the connexion, and to the style and manner of the writer or speaker, and at the same time consistent with the general tenor and spirit of the New Testament, then it necessarily follows that Unitarianism is the doctrine of the Gospel.—My own opinion is, that Unitarianism alone accords with the general tenor of the New Testament, and that there is nothing in the New Testament inconsistent with it;—that it is founded upon the great bulk of scriptural evidence, and affords an adequate explanation of whatever does not directly teach it.

I shall divide the evidence produced in favour

* It is a principle by far too little observed by the opponents of Unitarianism, that there is a wide difference between *proving* and *according with* a doctrine. We do not deny that several passages in the N.T. sufficiently well accord with their opinions; but we cannot admit that these can in any way prove them, unless they *require* an explanation, which, in the given circumstances, is inconsistent with our own. See also p. 2.

of the chief doctrines respecting the nature of our Saviour into three classes; first, that which is supposed to prove the *Equality* of the Son with the Father; secondly, that which is supposed to prove his *Proper Deity;* and thirdly, that which is supposed to prove his *Pre-existence.*

CHAP. V.

Consideration of the Passages supposed to prove the Equality of the Son with the Father.

BEFORE the Reader proceeds to the examination of the few texts which are supposed to countenance the equality of him whom the Father *sent*, with the Father, whom he himself calls *the only true God*, I beg leave to request his reconsideration of the passages quoted in the first four sections of Chap. III.; and particularly of the remarkable expression of our Lord, 'THE FATHER IS GREATER THAN I.'

Matt. xxviii. 19. 'Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them into (εις) the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy spirit.'

On this passage I observe (1) "To be baptized *into* or *in the name*, is to be baptized *into the faith* or *confession*, or, *in token of one's faith and of*

and ch. vi. In *Isaiah* liii. is a distinct prophecy of the *Messiah*, who, (after various sublime declarations respecting the *unrivalled supremacy of* JEHOVAH, recorded in different parts of the preceding portion, beginning with the 40th chapter,) is called by JEHOVAH himself, HIS SERVANT, (ch. lii. 13,) and spoken of by the Prophet as *a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.* In ch. vi. is a vision of the glory of JEHOVAH OF HOSTS. It is impossible that there can be TWO *Jehovahs;* and it is impossible that the *Messiah*, the SERVANT of *Jehovah* could be *Jehovah himself:* it therefore necessarily follows, that the JEHOVAH, whose glory the Prophet saw, was the great Being so often styled Jehovah, and who solemnly declared by Isaiah himself, *I am* JEHOVAH, *and there is* NONE ELSE. To suppose to the contrary, is (in my judgment) to make Revelation full of absurdities and contradictions.

Could the Apostle John, then, (who heard his revered and beloved Master *pray* to the FATHER as the ONLY TRUE GOD, who was near him in that hour when, *with strong crying and tears*, he offered up *prayers and supplications*, and said, FATHER, *not my will but thine be done*,—who heard him ascribe *his doctrines*, *his powers*, *his authority*, *his glory*, to the agency of God,—and, even in heaven, speaking of God, as *his God*,) could this Apostle mean to have it inferred, that he spoke of the servant of Jehovah as Jehovah himself? Surely it is impossible.

As *Isaiah* vi. refers to the appointment of the *Prophet* to his divine message, and that message, though *applicable* to the age of the Messiah, peculiarly referred to the times of the Prophet, it is most probable that the Evangelist, when he says that Isaiah *saw* the glory of the Messiah, &c. (*i.e. foresaw* it, as Abraham is said to have *seen, i.e. foreseen* the day of Christ, *John* viii. 56,) meant merely to refer to the portion of Isaiah beginning with ch. liii. 1, which, though first describing the humiliation and sufferings of the Messiah, plainly predicts the glory that should follow, and the unrivalled diffusion of gospel blessings.—In this view the words quoted in *John* xii. 39, 40, from *Isaiah* vi. 9, 10, may be considered as a parenthesis, attributing the incredulity of the Jews, complained of in *v.* 38, to the same perverse stupidity which was manifested in the times of the Prophet.

Even if the Evangelist really referred to *both* passages of Isaiah, in the expression *these things said Isaiah*, yet as he could not intend to contradict his Lord himself, or the declarations of Jehovah by Isaiah, he could have meant no more, than that *the glory of Jehovah*, of which *the whole earth is full*, (*Isa.* vi. 3,) was the glory arising from the diffusion of gospel blessings, that glory with which Jesus glorified his Father, that glory which Jehovah gave his servant, the Messiah, and which he had designed for him from all eternity.

Rom. ix. 5. "Whose are the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ *came*, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen."

This passage admits of different renderings, according to the punctuation adopted. The one just quoted from the common version, is obviously justifiable as far as *language* merely is concerned; but the language does not in any degree *require* it. The original equally well admits of this rendering, 'From whom *was* the Christ, as to the flesh.* God who is over all *be* blessed for ever.'† The only difficulty attending

* This is the arrangement in the original, and lessens the apparent abruptness of the doxology.—That the expression *το κατα σαρκα* (according to the flesh), does not prove that the Christ had two natures, see *v.* 3. 'for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh (*κατα σαρκα*).' See also the remarks on *Rom.* i. 3. in Chap. VII.

† The original is, *και εξ ων ὁ Χριστος το κατα σαρκα ὁ ων επι παντων Θεος ευλογητος εις τους αιωνας αμην.* The rendering which is generally adopted by Unitarians, requires the point after *σαρκα.*—Dr. Middleton (Doct. of Gr. Art. p. 459,) says, "that in "all the Doxologies both of the LXX and of the N.T. in which "*ευλογητος* is used, it is placed at the beginning of the sentence; "in the N.T. there are five instances all conspiring to prove this "usage, and in the LXX about forty. The same arrangement is "in the formula of cursing, in which *επικαταρατος* always pre-"cedes the mention of the person cursed. The reading, then, would "on this construction RATHER have been *ευλογητος ὁ ων επι* "*παντων Θεος εις τους αιωνας.*" This is the only reason Dr. M. adduces, and the only one which, in my opinion, can be adduced, against the rendering 'God who is over all be blessed for ever.' Yet he afterwards says, "For these reasons I conclude that both "the proposed constructions are INADMISSIBLE;" referring to the above and to Mr. Locke's, which is, 'God *be* blessed for ever.' Dr. Middleton's assertion then, as far as it respects our construction, amounts to this, 'It is inadmissible, *because* the reading would on this construction *rather* have been *ευλογητος ὁ ων επι παντων Θεος εις τους αιωνας.*' As he has not ventured to maintain, that such *must* have been, or even *probably* would have been the arrangement of the words on our construction, his unjustifiable assertion may be left to its just fate. However it may not be amiss to observe (1) That his arrangement leaves it doubtful to what *εις τους αιωνας*

the phraseology, arises from the position of *blessed*, (since in the other passages in the New Testament, where a similar doxology is employed, we find *blessed* come first, thus, 'Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies,' &c.); and this is a very trifling one; for in the other instances there are words depending upon the word *God*, which renders it at least more desirable to introduce *blessed* first, as in the instance now quoted; and nothing either in the words or construction renders it necessary to be so placed in the present case.

Here then are two interpretations of the words

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belongs; and best suits this rendering 'Blessed be he who is for ever God over all,' which obviously was not the Apostle's meaning. (2) Since θεος has here nothing depending upon it and ευλογητος has, the arrangement in cases where θεος has dependent words and ευλογητος has not, is not in point, and therefore furnishes no objection against our construction. (3) The epithet ευλογητος is no where applied to Jesus, but it is used in reference to God and to God only in every other case in which it is employed in the N.T. *viz. Mark* xiv. 61. *Luke* i. 68. *Rom.* i. 25. 2 *Cor.* i. 3. xi. 31. *Eph.* i. 3. 1 *Pet.* i. 3. If the reader will take the trouble of examining these passages, he will soon perceive to which interpretation the usages of the N.T. should direct us.

After perusing these remarks, if the reader should turn to the Eclectic Review for April 1809, and observe the strong assertions in p. 331, *founded* upon Middleton's *proofs*, he must feel confident, either that I have kept back Dr. M.'s evidence, or else that system completely warped the convictions of the Reviewer. I can assure him that the former is not the case. The only objections that Dr. M. brings against *Locke's* constructions are, the want of the article before θεος, and the position of ευλογητος; both of which, if the point be placed after παντων, have some weight. He admits that upon *our* construction θεος does not want the article; and his *only* objection to it is what I have stated, and I hope proved to be of little or no weight.—The Reviewer calls this passage a "*signal* testimony to the Deity of the Messiah." Does he mean to affirm too that it is unambiguous, and to represent it as a chief testimony to this doctrine?

of Paul; one perfectly accordant with his manner of writing, and with the general tenor of his Epistles; the other inconsistent with that general tenor, and directly opposed by his express assertions in various parts of his writings.* Let common sense decide to which the preference should be given; and let not its decision be called in question, merely because it leads to reject a rendering which custom has made plain and obvious, in favour of one which custom would soon make at least as plain and obvious.

Phil. ii. 6. "Thought it not robbery to be equal with God."

The original is *ειναι ισα θεῳ*; and may justly be rendered 'to be *like* God.' As I shall consider the rest of the passage in Ch. VI. § 3, I refer to that for farther remarks upon it.

Eph. v. 5. "The kingdom of the Christ and God." 2 *Thess.* i. 12. "According to the grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ." 1 *Tim.* v. 21. "I charge thee before the God and [Lord], Jesus Christ."† *Tit.* ii. 13. "The glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ." 2 *Pet.* i. 1. "Through the righteousness of our God and Saviour, Jesus Christ."‡

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* See pp. 37, 40, 45, &c.

† Mr. Sharp adduces also 2 *Tim.* iv. 1. probably supposing that *του* before *κυριου* is alone spurious. The fact however is, that both *του* and *κυριου* are spurious, and are rejected by Griesbach. This puts the passage out of the reach of Mr. Sharp's canon.

‡ The common reading of *Jude* 4, has led Mr. Sharp to render it, 'Denying our only Master, God, and Lord, Jesus Christ.' Griesbach rejects *θεος*. This rather more conveniently brings the case under Mr. S.'s canon, but destroys much of its supposed force. Still, since the word *δεσποτης sovereign Lord* is, in no clear instance, applied to Jesus, and in the N.T. is at least three times applied to the God of Jesus, and since the word *μονον, only*, if it refer to our Lord Jesus Christ, excludes Him who is assuredly the Sovereign Lord, and whom Jude himself calls the ONLY GOD (p. 56), that rendering is most scriptural which refers *the only sovereign* to the only God.

These are all *practicable* renderings of the passages referred to. I quote them together, because they depend upon the same grammatical canon: and I introduce them in this head, because *Tit.* ii. 13, if it *must* be so rendered, is a direct evidence of the equality of him whom the Apostle calls the MAN Christ Jesus, with Him whom he calls the ONLY GOD, the ONLY WISE GOD, the GOD of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The full examination of the canon on which these renderings are founded, would lead into investigations which would be inconsistent with my present object. I refer the critical reader with great satisfaction to the pamphlet before mentioned (p. 55, *note*), for proof that these renderings are unnecessary, and the common renderings fully justifiable.* The latest defenders of Mr. Sharp's renderings (*viz.* Dr. Middleton and Eclectic Reviewer,)† seem to lay little or no stress upon any except *Eph.* v. 5. *Tit.* ii. 13. 2 *Pet.* i. 1; and of these Dr. M. considers the first as 'the least questionable.' The least questionable, however, in a *grammatical*‡ point of view, is the second, *Tit.* ii. 13; and if it be admitted that the canon need not be applied to it, still more must this be admitted in the other cases. Now that Mr. Sharp's ren-

* In *Appendix* III. I have thought desirable to give a brief view of the critical arguments.

† I leave this as in the Second Edition (1811), because I am not aware that any additional light has been since thrown on the subject. (3d. Ed.)

‡ On account of the position of ἡμων.

dering, "The glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ," ought not to be adopted, I infer from the following considerations *taken together*. (1) Though *accordant* with the Greek idiom, it is not *required* by it.* (2) If the Apostle had intended to give the epithet GREAT GOD to the *Man Christ Jesus*, he might have done it unambiguously by saying, 'the appearing of Jesus Christ our great God and Saviour,' or 'of our great God Jesus Christ,' &c. (3) The Apostle calls Jesus Christ MAN, and reasons from his being MAN, but in no instance calls him God, much less the GREAT GOD. (4) He uniformly speaks of God and Christ as two distinct beings. (5) He speaks of the Father as the GOD of Jesus, as the ONLY GOD, as the ONLY WISE GOD; and twice† he declares, as explicitly as words can do, and in a manner which *necessarily* confines his declaration to the *Father*, to the exclusion of Jesus Christ, that there is ONE GOD.

After these statements, I assert, without a moment's hesitation, that Mr. Sharp's rendering

* For the proof of this I refer to Blunt and Winstanley, particularly to the latter. He has *proved*, that where the *signification* of the nouns renders *farther* mark of personal distinction *unnecessary*, the second article is not unfrequently omitted, as in the cases under consideration: and before any one adduces these texts as proofs of the Deity of Christ, he ought to *prove*, 1. That the words not only *may* but *must* be so rendered, or 2. That the signification of the nouns does *not* render farther mark of distinction unnecessary. That Dr. Middleton and other learned advocates for the canon of Mr. Sharp, do not refute Mr. Winstanley's temperate but decisive statements (if known to them) may reasonably be attributed to inability. (See *Appendix* III.)

† See p. 37, 40.

of these words of Paul is totally *unscriptural*, expressly *contradictory* to the plain and obvious assertions of the Apostle himself.* To do justice to the Apostle, the genuine readings in question should be rendered as follows. *Eph.* v. 5. 'In the kingdom of Christ and of God.' 2 *Thess.* i. 12. 'According to the grace of our God and of *the* Lord Jesus Christ.' 1 *Tim.* v. 21. 'I charge thee before God and [*the* Lord] Jesus Christ.' 2 *Tim.* iv. 1. 'I charge thee before God and Jesus Christ.' *Tit.* ii. 13. 'The glorious appearing of the great God and of our Saviour Jesus Christ.' 2 *Pet.* i. 1. 'By the justification of our God and of *our* Saviour Jesus Christ.' *Jude* iv. 'Denying the only Sovereign and our Lord Jesus Christ.'†

* The unlearned reader may enter a little into the grammatical nicety in question, by the common rendering of *Tit.* ii. 13. 'the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.' Probably no person who had been accustomed to think of God and Christ as two distinct *beings*, could feel any doubt as to the meaning of these words; yet they certainly leave it somewhat doubtful, as to the phraseology merely, whether the words *the great God*, and our Saviour, thus connected by *and* and preceded by *of*, do not refer to the same person Jesus Christ. If Paul had written in English, and had never had any idea that Jesus Christ was, or would be, considered as the great God, I suppose that he would not have hesitated in employing the phraseology in the common version: if he had been scrupulously careful to prevent it from being imagined, that he meant Jesus Christ by the *great God*, he would probably have written, 'and OF our Saviour;' if, lastly, he intended to call Jesus Christ the *great God*, as he never did so before, (and we have no reason to suppose that any other Apostle ever did,) in order to put such a singular appellation out of all doubt, he would in all probability have said; 'of Jesus Christ the great God and our Saviour,' or 'of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ.' The Greek is (from a *similar* cause) just as ambiguous as the English, and no more; and I contend that no one, who allowed the Apostle to be his own interpreter, could suppose that by 'the great God' he meant Jesus Christ.

† The true reading of 2 *Tim.* iv. 1, and the very probable reading

1 *John* v. 7, 8. 'For there are three that bear record "*in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the holy spirit; and these three are one* (ἐν). *And there are three that bear witness in earth,*" the spirit and the water and the blood; and these three agree in one.'

No one with any pretensions to critical knowledge can doubt as to the spuriousness of *the passage*. It is sufficient to repeat the assertion already made, that it was not written in *Greek* till at least 1100 years after the Epistle itself was written. It rests almost wholly upon the testimony and fidelity of Vigilius Tapsensis, who *first* cited it, about 400 years after the Epistle was written; which Vigilius was a noted forger of books under other person's names, and very probably wrote the creed called the Creed of St. Athanasius, but which Athanasius certainly did *not* write.*

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of 1 *Tim.* v. 21, exclude those passages from Mr. Sharp's canon. It is deserving of notice, that, in every other of the cases, the governing word refers to God and our Lord Jesus Christ, not only equally but as one subject. It is not 'the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Christ,' but, the *one* 'kingdom of God and Christ;' not 'the manifestation of the great God and the manifestation of our Saviour Jesus Christ,' but the *one* 'manifestation of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; not, 'denying the only Sovereign and denying our Lord Jesus Christ' separately, but both together and at once. And I consider it as at least highly probable, that it is upon *this* principle that the article is prefixed to the first noun, though it is not prefixed to the second. Mr. Winstanley has given the principle generally (*Vindication* p. 34,) and applied it to *Eph.* v. 5. Whether he was aware that it equally applies to all the renderings in question I do not know; but he does not appear to lay the stress upon this application of it which it obviously deserves.

* The opinions of the Eclectic Reviewers will not be suspected of heterodoxy, and I therefore transcribe their judgment (March 1809,) respecting this passage. After giving a brief, but adequate, summary of the evidence against it, (*for* it, it can scarcely be said with truth that there is any,) they say, "Under these circumstances "we are unspeakably ashamed, that any modern divines should

1 *John* v. 20. 'And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding that we may know Him that is true; and we are in (εν) Him that is true, by (εν) His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.'

The Apostle obviously means to assert that He (and He only) whom Jesus had given them an understanding to know, is the true God and the source of everlasting life; and he accordingly directs his disciples, in the next verse, to keep themselves from idols. That *this* (ουτος) may refer to the remote antecedent must be admitted by all; for otherwise, in 2 *John* 7, the Apostle calls his revered Lord a 'deceiver and an antichrist:' that therefore it *must*, is obvious from *John* xvii. 3. where, as has been often observed, Jesus himself, praying to the FATHER calls *Him* the ONLY TRUE GOD.

The foregoing are, to the best of my knowledge, all the passages which can be considered as directly countenancing the doctrine, that Jesus is a person of one substance, power, and eternity with the Father. This doctrine, however, receives some support from those passages which are supposed to prove the proper Deity of our Lord; for since the language of Scripture is very express, that there is but one God, it is inferred that the Son, if God, must be one God

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"have fought *pedibus et unguibus* for the retention of a passage so "indisputably spurious." And again, "They are in our esteem the "best advocates of the Trinitarian doctrine, who join in exploding "such a gross interpolation, and in protesting against its being still "permitted to occupy a place in the common copies of the New "Testament."

with the Father. This inference is a plausible one; and, in words, this doctrine possesses a decided superiority over the High Arian scheme, (at least over Dr. Clarke's Arianism,) by preserving, *in appearance*, the proper unity of God; but if *ideas* are attached to the words employed, Trinitarianism is, in reality, either Tritheism or Sabellianism: if the Father, Son, and Spirit, are three *persons*, that is, three *intelligent agents*,* and each God, there must be three Gods; if Father, Son, and Spirit, are one God, they must also be one *intelligent agent*, or more accurately Father, Son, and Spirit, must be *names* merely for one intelligent agent, one God. That Jesus the Christ, the Son of God, is not the same person with the Father, is so completely forced upon the mind by the language of the Scriptures, that it is much to be feared that a large proportion of those Trinitarians who do connect ideas with their language respecting the Father, Son, and Spirit, really *think* of them as three "distinct infinite minds," and of course as three Gods. Those who satisfy themselves with regarding the doctrine of Trinity in Unity as a mystery, without attempting to realize the language which they employ, would do well to examine the Scriptures, and see whether this mysterious doctrine was really taught by the Son of God,

* Sherlock, in his Vindication, (p. 66,) adopts decisive language. "To say that there are three distinct persons, "and not *three distinct infinite minds* is both heresy and nonsense." And in p. 105, "Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, *are as really distinct persons* as Peter, James, and John."

directly, or through his Apostles. My own conviction respecting the scriptural grounds of the doctrine of the *Equality* of the Son with the Father, I have already stated in p. 92; and in p. 106—109, I have adduced specific passages which are *expressly contradictory* to it.

CHAP. VI.

Consideration of the Passages which are supposed to support the Doctrine of the PROPER DEITY *of Jesus.*

THESE passages may be conveniently examined under five heads: (1) Those in which Jesus is, or is supposed to be, called *God;* (2) Those in which it is supposed that the Creation of the *natural* world is ascribed to him; (3) Those which ascribe to him other Titles, Perfections, and Powers, which are thought to be inconsistent with his Proper Humanity; (4) Those which are supposed to teach his Superiority to Angels; and (5) Those in which it is thought that Jesus is represented as the object of Religious Worship.

Before entering on the explanations offered in this chapter, I solicit the Reader's attention to the evidence adduced in the third, (if he have not already examined it;) and especially in the sections beginning in pp. 93, 99, and 117. This evidence often forms the basis of the conclusions advanced.

SECT. I.

Passages in which Jesus is, or is supposed to be, called GOD.

Matt. i. 23. 'They shall call his name IMMANUEL, which being interpreted, is, GOD WITH US.'

I HAVE already stated my conviction respecting the Introduction to Matthew's Gospel, (see p. 20, *note*); and with that conviction, cannot allow that any inference from this passage can weigh in the argument: but if Jesus had been called Immanuel, (which is not stated in any subsequent part of the New Testament,) the name* would have implied no more than those expressions imply which are recorded in *Luke* vii. 16. 'a great Prophet hath risen up among us, and, God hath visited his people.'—It is not said, 'Jesus shall be God with us,' but 'they shall call his *name*, GOD IS WITH US:'† and God was indeed with us by Jesus; He was with us by those wonderful works which Jesus wrought because God was with him;‡ and He was with

* See p. 23. note (‡).

† Mr. Yates, in his *Vindication of Unitarianism*, p. 170—173, shows that the proper rendering of '*Immanuel*' is '*God is with us.*' In *Is.* viii. 16, the same words in the original are rendered 'God is with us.' "In order," he says, p. 170, "to perceive the true meaning of IMMANUEL, it is necessary to consider the singular manner in which *proper names* were formed and applied by the ancient Hebrews. It was common among them to give to their children names which were in reality short sentences, expressive of some divine favour conferred at the time of the child's birth. Thus Hagar called her new-born son ISHMAEL, which is, being interpreted, GOD HATH HEARD!—an exclamation expressive of her joy that God had heard her affliction. (*Gen.* xvi. 11.) Agreeably to the same idiom most other Scripture names are to be understood."

‡ *Acts* x. 38.

us by Jesus, since by him He fully revealed His own gracious purposes to mankind. Jesus was the mercy-seat, where the God of love manifested His love to men; and if our Saviour had been called Immanuel, I, for one, would have said that he was called so most justly.

Luke i. 16, 17. 'And many of the children of Israel shall he *(John)* turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before Him in the spirit and power of Elias.'

As the Baptist went before Jesus, it has been inferred by some, that *Jesus* is intended by the words 'the Lord their God.'—This inference is contrary to the analogy of the Scriptures in general, and of the writings of Luke in particular; nor does the original justify it. The literal English is, 'And he shall go forth in His sight, προελευσεται ενωπιον αυτου.'* The Christ is in no way mentioned in the Angel's speech to Zachariah; nor does the construction in any way require such a reference here.

John i. 1. 'And the Word was God,' or, 'a God.'

If by *the Word* the Apostle meant Jesus Christ, he here gives the appellation *God* to him. I believe that he does this; and if, as I also believe, the Apostle did not regard his revered Lord as

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* Προερχομαι is used nine times in the N.T. in three of which it signifies *to proceed; viz. Matt.* xxvi. 39. *Mark* xiv. 35. *Acts* xii. 10. If it be translated *precede*, an ellipsis must be supposed of του χριστου, and the passage rendered, 'And in His sight shall he go before the Christ in the spirit and power of Elias.'—Ενωπιον very frequently occurs in Luke's writings, (see among other instances, *Luke* i. 15, where it is said, that the Baptist would be great *in the sight of the Lord,)* and is usually and properly rendered in reference to *place*.

a being possessed of a *nature* superior to that of man, he was fully justified in so doing, by the Jewish use of the appellation.* Jesus was the representative of God to mankind; and, as such, he was, in the Jewish phraseology, a God.†

Waterland, after urging against Clarke that he who is not supreme God cannot be properly God, says,‡ that "if by any way of allusion and "resemblance, any thing be called *God*, because "resembling God in one or more particulars, "we are not to conclude that it is properly and "truly God." Again, "Part of the complex "idea which goes with the word *God*, is, that

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* See pp. 62, 73. "Schleusner on the word θεος, sense 4, remarks, that it is used metaphorically, to denote one who acts by the order, command, and authority of God, and in the stead of God upon earth." Simpson's Essays, Vol. II. p. 12. "The two expressions, *the Word was a God*, and, *the Word was a Man*, being both used concerning the same person, cannot both be taken in the plain obvious meaning of these terms to us, because this involves several palpable contradictions." *Ibid.* p. 10. "If in the Introduction to his Gospel, John had asserted that Jesus was truly God, he would have proposed to his readers a Messiah, whose very nature and properties were totally different from those of the person whom the Prophets predicted, and whose advent the Jews eagerly expected. He would also have contradicted the assertions of Moses, of John the harbinger of the Messiah, of Jesus himself, and of his Apostles and Disciples that he was a man." *Ibid.* p. 17. But "in the first chapter of the Gospel of John, there are several characters which obviously prove the proper humanity of the Logos;" see *v.* 14. (comp. p. 65); *v.* 30, *v.* 41. 45. compared with *Deut.* xviii. 18, 19.) and *v.* 51. *Ibid.* p. 19.

† If any object to this interpretation, that it supposes two meanings of the word θεος in the same sentence, I refer them to *John* x. 34, 35. and *Psalm* xlv. 6, 7. for a complete removal of the difficulty.

‡ The following extracts were made, I believe, from the Vindication of the Divinity of Christ, p. 49—53. I cannot however pledge myself for the accuracy of the reference, or of the quotation itself as to *words*; since I have not now the means of examining either.

" his habitation is sublime, and his dwelling not
" with the flesh, *Dan.* ii. 11; this part of the idea
" is applicable to angels or to saints, and there-
" fore they may thus far be reputed Gods, and
" are sometimes so styled in Scripture, or in
" ecclesiastical writers. Another part of the com-
" plex idea of *God*, is *giving orders from above and*
" *publishing commands from heaven;* this was in
" some sense applicable to Moses, who is there-
" fore called a God unto Pharaoh, *not as being*
" *properly God, but instead of God in that instance*
" *or in that resembling circumstance.*—Dominion
" goes along with the idea of *God*, or is a part of
" it, and therefore kings, princes, or magistrates,
" resembling God in that respect, may, by like
" figure of speech, be called Gods; not properly,
" but by way of allusion, and in regard to some
" imperfect resemblance which they bear to God,
" in some particular respects, and this is all."
He afterwards says, " The Scripture notion of
" GOD, is, *A Sovereign Ruler, an* ALMIGHTY *Pro-*
" *tector, an* OMNISCIENT *and* OMNIPRESENT *Go-*
" *vernor; an* ETERNAL, IMMUTABLE, ALL-SUFFI-
" CIENT CREATOR, *Preserver, and Protector.*
" Whatever falls short of this is not *properly*, in
" the Scripture notion, *God;* but is only so called
" by way of figure, as before explained."

In all this I most cordially agree; and as the Scriptures expressly assert* that Jesus is *not* OMNISCIENT, and that he is *not* ALMIGHTY, and as

* See above p. 107—109.

SECT. I.

Passages in which Jesus is, or is supposed to be, called GOD.

Matt. i. 23. 'They shall call his name IMMANUEL, which being interpreted, is, GOD WITH US.'

I HAVE already stated my conviction respecting the Introduction to Matthew's Gospel, (see p. 20, *note*); and with that conviction, cannot allow that any inference from this passage can weigh in the argument: but if Jesus had been called Immanuel, (which is not stated in any subsequent part of the New Testament,) the name* would have implied no more than those expressions imply which are recorded in *Luke* vii. 16. 'a great Prophet hath risen up among us, and, God hath visited his people.'—It is not said, 'Jesus shall be God with us,' but 'they shall call his *name*, GOD IS WITH US:'† and God was indeed with us by Jesus; He was with us by those wonderful works which Jesus wrought because God was with him;‡ and He was with

* See p. 23. note (‡).

† Mr. Yates, in his *Vindication of Unitarianism*, p. 170—173, shows that the proper rendering of '*Immanuel*' is '*God is with us.*' In *Is.* viii. 16, the same words in the original are rendered 'God is with us.' "In order," he says, p. 170, "to perceive the true meaning of IMMANUEL, it is necessary to consider the singular manner in which *proper names* were formed and applied by the ancient Hebrews. It was common among them to give to their children names which were in reality short sentences, expressive of some divine favour conferred at the time of the child's birth. Thus Hagar called her new-born son ISHMAEL, which is, being interpreted, GOD HATH HEARD!—an exclamation expressive of her joy that God had heard her affliction. (*Gen.* xvi. 11.) Agreeably to the same idiom most other Scripture names are to be understood."

‡ *Acts* x. 38.

really and properly God,) these words imply no more, than that he was now convinced of his *divine authority*.* That this was all that Thomas could mean, I think evident for the following reasons: (1) Before our Lord's resurrection, as is clear from the whole tenor of the Gospels, the disciples knew nothing of any superior *nature* being possessed by Jesus: (2) His resurrection proved nothing more than had been proved by his miracles, &c. *viz.* that he was the Son of God: (3) Thomas's incredulity respected the fact of the resurrection, and this only (see *v.* 25, 27): (4) The circumstances in which Thomas thus addressed Jesus, must have convinced him that Jesus was really a man, had he doubted on that head before: (5) The supernatural knowledge which Jesus manifested on this occasion, and which must have forcibly struck the mind of his unbelieving disciple, he had manifested on several occasions, during his public ministry, without leading his disciples to the inference that he was properly God.—From these considerations, in connexion with what has been observed respecting the scriptural use of the appellation *God*, I infer, that Thomas, (if he applied the appellation to Jesus,) could mean no more, than that Jesus had in truth spoken and acted with the authority of God, that he now no longer doubted that he came from God:—as if he had said, "I again own thee as my Master; I again acknowledge that in truth thou camest forth

* See p. 149, p. 62, and p. 72.

from God, and spakest the words of God." See *John* x. 35.*

Acts xx. 28. "To feed the Church 'of God' which he hath purchased with his own blood."

Luke most probably wrote 'of the Lord.' Griesbach unhesitatingly rejects θεου *(of God)*, and reads του κυριου *(of the Lord)*; and says, that on the evidence for the latter reading, he could not do otherwise.†

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* Some suppose that Thomas's exclamation is not at all to be regarded as an *address to* Jesus himself, though *so* introduced; and reference has been made to 1 *Sam.* xx. 12, where, in the P.V., we find, "And Jonathan *said unto David*, 'O LORD God of Israel, when I have sounded my father about to-morrow any time or the third day, and, behold, if there be good towards David, and I then send not unto thee and shew it thee, the LORD do much more to Jonathan, &c.'" In reply, it has been urged, that the common rendering of this passage is unnatural; and several critics supply the sense thus, 'The Lord God of Israel *be witness*.' It was in this manner supplied by the Greek, Syriac, and Arabic translators; and two Hebrew manuscripts have the same supplement: but there is no room to believe that the original Hebrew contained it. The abruptness of the exclamation leads the translator, in this case, to supply some words: why (if the sense require it) should they not be supplied in the case of Thomas's exclamation? For instance 'My Lord and my God! *how great thy power*.'—Wakefield and some others consider the address to Christ as ending with the first appellation; and divide the exclamation thus; 'My Lord!' and, (he also said,) 'my God!' (Compare the construction in *Acts* i. 20.)—The Apostle's exclamation of astonishment and joy is too brief, and the latitude of his native language too great, to allow, perhaps, of certainty as to his precise meaning; but I think it great injustice to him to interpret his words in any sense inconsistent with the first principles of his faith as a Jew, sanctioned as they were most expressly by the declarations of him in whom he now believed with undoubting confidence.

I have thought it desirable to point out different ways in which the exclamation of Thomas may be taken, so as to be consistent with the belief of his and our Lord, that the FATHER is the ONLY TRUE GOD: but my mind is still most satisfied with that in the text. I think no *Jew* would have joined the two appellations together, as in the first of these interpretations, when addressing JEHOVAH; and the separation in the second interpretation seems scarcely consistent with the ardent hurried feelings of the moment. (3d. Ed.)

† The Eclectic Reviewers (March 1809), whose opinion cannot

Rom. ix. 5. "Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen." See p. 136.

1 Tim. iii. 16. "'God' was manifested in the flesh."

In this text, the word θεος, in all probability, did not come from the pen of the Apostle, who wrote either ος *(he who)*,* or ο *(which)* referring

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be supposed to be warped by Unitarianism (except indeed from it,) after a summary of the evidence, say, "On seriously weighing all "the evidence, every impartial mind, we conceive, will admit that "the last," *viz. the Lord*, "has the fairest claim to acceptance as "the genuine reading."

* The Eclectic Reviewers, though they admit ος to be the genuine reading, consider this rendering of it as unauthorized; and following Cramer, refer the relative to θεον in v. 15, thus; "Which "is the church of the living GOD (the pillar and support of the "truth, and confessedly great, is the mystery of godliness) who was "manifested," &c. A writer in the Christian Observer (June 1809) speaks of this parenthetical rendering as harsh: if any one however choose to adopt it, because it supports (in appearance) the doctrine of incarnation, thus far may be allowed him, that it is a *practicable* rendering; but it cannot be allowed that it is in *any* degree unjustifiable to render ος *he who*. It is *perfectly* accordant with the idiom of the N.T., as the following passages (adduced by Primitivus in the Monthly Repository, June 1809,) abundantly prove: *John* iii. 34. Ον γαρ απεστειλεν ο θεος, for HE WHOM God hath sent; *Rom.* xv. 21. Οις ουκ αναγγελη περι αυτου οψονται και οι ουκ ακηκοασι συνησουσι, THEY to WHOM he was not spoken of shall see; and THEY WHO have not heard shall understand; 1 *John* iv. 6. Ος ουκ εστιν εκ του θεου ουκ ακουει ημων, HE WHO is not of God heareth not us.—I bear a willing testimony to the abilities often displayed in the critique on the Improved Version in the Eclectic Review; I consider the Author of it as having rendered, by his arguments and statements respecting the common text and version, an important service to the cause of scriptural knowledge, the more useful because out of the reach of suspicion; and I trust that what he has said will greatly contribute to remove from the minds of persons of his own sentiments those widely prevalent prejudices respecting the common text and version which are almost as injurious as they are unfounded: but I must add, that in several instances he has totally forgotten the impartiality of the critic, in his zeal for his own theological system, and without adequate examination, has given an unjust verdict. The present passage affords full proof of this. He asserts that the passages adduced by Archbishop Newcome, in justification of the rendering, 'he who was manifested,' are irrelevant, because, in them, ος is followed by a particle, as τε,

to 'the mystery' in the last verse. Griesbach rejects θεος from the text, and reads ος, maintaining that this change is required by those laws of criticism by which he had formed his text, and which had been approved by the most learned critics.

Upon Griesbach's reading, the passage may be thus interpreted: 'Confessedly great is the mystery of the Gospel dispensation, (the admission of Gentiles into its glorious privileges:)* He who was manifested in flesh, (that is,† who came forth among men to execute his divine commission, in circumstances of great humuilia-

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γε, δη, αν, γαρ, which it is not in 1 *Tim.* iii. 16. These passages are *Mark* iv. 25. *Luke* viii. 18. *Rom.* viii. 32; and in the *first* ος occurs twice in the sense ascribed to it, *without* a particle, και ος ουκ εχει και ο εχει αρθησεται απ' αυτου, And HE WHO hath not, even THAT WHICH he hath shall be taken from him. The Critic may indeed have been misled by the Ος γαρ αν εχη at the *beginning* of the verse; but a person more anxious about truth than about system, should have read the whole. The fact is, that ος is used like the *qui* of the Romans, though less frequently, without an antecedent; and as to those cases in which it is followed by a particle, unless that particle affect the sense of the relative, (as it is admitted that αν does,) they are just as much in point as those in which it is alone.—Some of those who have not access to the Monthly Repository, will perhaps be glad to have the following unexceptionable instances noted, in which ος is used (either in the masculine or in the neuter) without an antecedent: *Mark* ix. 40. xiii. 37. xiv. 8. *John* i. 46. iv. 18. *Rom.* ii. 23. vii. 15. viii. 24. (also *v.* 29.) 1 *Cor.* x. 20. 2 *Cor.* xi. 17. If any peruse the original with a view to this question, they will find many more.

* This is obviously spoken of in the following clauses, and is expressly called 'the mystery of Christ,' in *Eph.* iii. 4.

† This interpretation is accordant with the style of St. Paul; and it receives some illustration and confirmation from 2 *Cor.* iv. 10, 11. That φανερωω of itself has no connexion with the mystery of incarnation, see *John* xxi. 1. 2 *Cor.* v. 10. *Col.* iii. 4. and many other places in St. Paul's writings That σαρξ *(flesh)* signifies *the whole human frame,* not unfrequently conveying the idea of *mortality* and *infirmity,* see Schleusner, No. 3.

tion, and at last underwent death itself,) was declared to be the Christ by the attestation of the Spirit, in his resurrection from the dead; was seen by his Apostles;* was preached among the Gentiles; was believed on in the world at large; was gloriously received by multitudes in every region where the sound of the Gospel was heard.'

If ὁ be the true reading, and its critical claims are somewhat preferable to those of θεος, the passage may be thus interpreted: 'Confessedly important is the gracious dispensation of the Gospel, the doctrine according to godliness,† which was revealed to us by one who was 'a man‡ of sorrows and acquainted with grief;' which was shown to be of divine origin by the attestation of the Spirit; which was viewed with astonishment and delight§ by those who were authorized to communicate it to others; which was preached among the Gentiles, &c.' as before.

If θεος had been the true reading, it appears

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* The word αγγελος *(angel)* as every Greek scholar knows, every where signifies *messenger*, and is often applied to *men:* see *Luke* vii. 27. ix. 52. "Was seen of angels, that is," says Macknight, "of the apostles and of the other witnesses, who were appointed to "publish and testify his resurrection to the world." *Apostle* has nearly the same meaning as *angel.* In 1 *Cor.* xv. 5—8, the fact here referred to is stated, with the use of the same verb ωφθη, in the same connexion, four times.

† Μυστηριον, *mystery*, in Paul's writings often denotes, those principles of the Gospel which before had been unknown to men, see *Rom.* xvi. 25. 1 *Cor.* iv. 1. xv. 51. *Eph.* i. 9, &c.

‡ See Note (†) in the last page.

§ Οπτομαι *(to be seen)* is usually connected with the idea, not only of admiration and amazement, but also of splendour, majesty, and excellence. See Schleusner.

clear to my mind, that the Apostle by saying, 'God was manifested' or made known in or 'by man,' could have meant no more than the Apostle John when he said, 'the only Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, hath declared Him,' or than our Lord himself when he said, 'he who hath seen me hath seen the Father:' God, by the Man Christ Jesus, manifested his gracious purposes to men; and thus he was indeed 'manifested in flesh.' The remainder of the passage would however have been very harsh upon this reading; and the common interpretation of the common reading, only serves to increase its difficulty, and seems to me full of absolute inconsistencies. According to this interpretation, HE *who is at all times present in every part of the universe*, was circumscribed by a human body: HE *who* ALONE *hath immortality*, was raised from the dead by the Spirit: HE *who dwelleth in light inaccessible, whom* NO ONE *hath seen or* CAN SEE, was seen by men: HE *who is the* BLESSED GOD, *and consequently ever and infinitely happy*, was received up into glory.—The doctrine of *incarnation*, (*viz.* that an infinite, eternal, and unchangeable Being, entered into a human frame, and by his union with it became truly man, susceptible of all the sufferings and wants of humanity,) is, in itself considered, so confounding to the imagination,* and throws such a weight upon the

* What the orthodox South said, I believe, of the doctrine of the trinity, may with equal truth be said of the doctrine of incarnation; "*Were it not to be adored as a* MYSTERY, *it would be exploded as* "*a* CONTRADICTION." Serm. vii. Vol. III. p. 240, 3d. Edit.

evidences of Christianity, that every one who holds it up as Christian doctrine, owes it to his religion to satisfy himself decisively that it is *really* revealed in the Scriptures.

For the passages which, according to Mr. Sharp's canon, apply the appellation *God* to Christ, see p. 138—141.

Heb. i. 8. "But unto the Son *he saith*, thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever," &c.

(1) The passage is taking from *Psalm* xlv. which was assuredly addressed to Solomon, and of which the Author of the Epistle to the Hebrews applies a part, (the whole he surely could not apply,) to Christ. The Author also appears to represent it as being said by God, whereas it obviously was spoken by the Psalmist himself (whoever that was); and this adds to the proof that it is quoted by this Author merely in the way of accommodation. (2) The Hebrew allows of the rendering 'God is thy throne,' equally with the common rendering; but the idiom of the Greek better suits the latter.* (3) Agreeably

* Mr. Yates, however, in the very able *Sequel* to his *Vindication of Unitarianism*, adduces from *Ps.* lxxiii. 26. a parallel form of construction (*ἡ μερις μου ὁ Θεος εις τον αιωνα, God is my portion for ever,*) proving that there is nothing in the Greek to prevent the words in question (*ὁ θρονος σου ὁ Θεος εις τον αιωνα*) from being rendered, *God is thy throne for ever.*—Dr. Pye Smith in his *Scripture Testimony* (Vol. I. p. 237) says, "All the Ancient Versions of the "original passage in the Psalms agree in supporting the common "construction, so far as their respective idioms permit a positive "conclusion. The Chaldee Paraphrase, the Greek of Aquila, and "the Arabic of the London Polyglot, are incontrovertible."—As far as the evidence for Unitarianism is concerned, I think it a matter of indifference which rendering is preferred; nor do I per-

to the latitude of the Hebrew language (p. 62), the Psalmist addresses *Solomon* as *Elohim:* 'Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever—therefore GOD, even THY GOD,' &c. There could surely be no reason why the Author of this Epistle, a *Jew*, familiar with the *Hebrew* idiom, writing to the *Hebrews*, should hesitate in applying to the *Man Christ Jesus*, an appellation which the Psalmist applies to *Solomon.** (4) Since the Author (*v.* 9) speaks of the *Supreme Being* as the GOD of him to whom he before gave the appellation *God*, he has left no reasonable ground for doubt, that he did not use the appellation in reference to *nature*, but merely to *dignity* and *office*. (Comp. p. 149).†

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ceive in the former, that extreme harshness and repugnancy "to good taste and to piety," which Dr. P. S. expresses so strongly; yet my mind still inclines to the latter, *i.e.* the common rendering. (3d. Ed.)

* Dr. Pye Smith (*Scrip. Test.* Vol. I. p. 238,) very justly remarks, that "the term *God* would be attached to Solomon in a sense *so far inferior* to that in which it was intended for the Messiah, as the limited and temporary kingdom of the former fell short of the extent and duration destined for the reign of the latter. The one reigned forty years over Judæa and its dependencies: the former possesses 'dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages shall serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.' Thy throne, O GOD, is for ever and ever."—Nothing can be more accordant with my own views; provided it be remembered, that this everlasting kingdom was GIVEN to the *Messiah* by GOD, even HIS GOD. Highly exalted as this illustrious person is, and incomparably superior as his dominion even now is to that of the most mighty earthly sovereign, he is himself, and for ever must be, infinitely below HIM who is the BLESSED AND ONLY POTENTATE, whose name ALONE is JEHOVAH, exalted above all blessing and praise, of whom, through whom, and to whom are all things. (3d. Ed.)

† "At the same time," says Dr. Pye Smith, "this magnificent Person, whose benignity, power, and holiness are thus celebrated, is

1 *John* iii. 16. "Hereby perceive we the love 'of God,' because he laid down his life for us."

The words του θεου *(of God)* are not even in the Received Text. Their authority is scarcely worthy of notice; and in all tolerable editions of the Public Version, *of God* is found in Italics, to intimate that these words are not in the original. The Apostle appears to have meant, 'Hereby we know what love is, for Christ laid down his life for us.' He is holding up the voluntary death of Christ for our good, as a motive to benevolent exertion for the good of others.

1 *John* v. 20. "We are in him that is true, *even* in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life." See p. 143.

From the foregoing citation of passages, it appears that, at most, there are only two instances in which the appellation God is applied to Jesus by the New Testament writers themselves, and only one other instance in which it is known to

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represented as receiving from HIS GOD a special appointment to the office of Messiah; an office whose importance far surpasses that of all other kings, and priests, and prophets; and an appointment, the propriety of which is expressly founded upon his character and qualifications: 'THEREFORE, God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of joy above thy companions.'" *(Scrip. Test.* Vol. I. p. 241.) This is the Unitarian doctrine. It represents the Messiah, however exalted in dignity and power, as receiving his high commission from his God, and receiving it for the righteousness and holiness of his character. Yet Dr. Pye Smith, a few pages before, says that this passage "exhibits the Messiah as the very Being who 'sitteth on the circle of the earth,' and, in comparison of whom 'all nations are as nothing, and are counted to him less than nothing and vanity.'" In other words, this able and learned critic considers this passage as teaching that the SERVANT of Jehovah is JEHOVAH himself. To what inconsistencies do unscriptural theories lead even the sincere lovers of scriptural truth! (3d. Ed.)

have been applied to Jesus by an Apostle;* and yet if he were truly and properly God, it could be known only by his own declarations, or by those of the Apostles. But he *never* called himself *God;* and in the most unqualified manner he called himself a MAN *who declared the truths*

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* In this last instance (*John* xx. 28), a *Jew* using the *Jewish* language, addressing a *Jew*, in the presence of *Jews*, employs an appellation, the application of which to those to 'whom the word of God came, his Master had lately shown (*John* x. 34, 35) to rest upon irrefragable authority, that of the *Jewish* Scriptures. In one of the former (*Heb.* i. 8), a *Jew*, writing to *Jews*, in an epistle whose object peculiarly respected the Jewish dispensation, applies to Jesus a passage addressed by the Psalmist to Solomon. Surely no difficulty can *possibly* exist as to these instances; it cannot be imagined to be in any degree unreasonable, to suppose that the appellation *God* is there employed in the manner in which it is employed in the Jewish Scriptures, in reference to beings of the human race: and I do not perceive how any difficulty can *reasonably* exist as to the remaining instance (*John* i. 2). Here a *Jew* who had probably heard, and who at any rate records in the same book, his Master's remarks respecting the *scriptural* use of the appellation *God*,—writing among, and probably for the use of those who were either *Jews* (see *Acts* xviii. 28. xix. 10. 17), or at any rate familiar with the *Jewish* Scriptures, (see various parts of Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians,)—applies an appellation to Jesus, in the application of which he was fully borne out by the phraseology of the Scriptures (both in the Hebrew original and the Greek translation), and by the declaration of our Lord himself in reference to that phraseology. Among those readers of St. John's Gospel who had learnt Christianity of him, or of St. Paul, or who had been converted from *Judaism* by any others, no difficulty could exist as to the way in which the Evangelist uses the term; and I think that a *heathen* convert could have felt no perplexity respecting it. If for a moment he had supposed from it, that Jesus was *truly God*, his error would at once have been corrected, when he came to the words of Jesus in which he addresses the FATHER as the ONLY TRUE GOD: he could not possibly imagine that the Apostle meant to represent Jesus as a God, in the sense in which the word was applied to the heathen divinities; and he therefore would naturally presume, that he applied the appellation God in the way in which Jesus himself said it was applied in the Jewish Scriptures, *viz.* on account of the divine authority of his declarations, because to him 'the word of God came,' because he was a man who had received important truths from God, and under His sanction delivered them to mankind.

which he had heard from GOD: see p. 70; and also p. 105.

SECT. II.

Passages in which it is supposed that the CREATION OF THE NATURAL WORLD *is ascribed to Jesus.*

BEFORE considering the passages separately, I wish to call the attention of the Reader to two undeniable principles.

First, the creation of the natural world is very frequently ascribed in the Scriptures to the Supreme Being himself, and in the most express and explicit language. For instance, *Gen.* i. 1. 'In the beginning, GOD created the heavens and the earth.' *Psalm* xcv. 5. 'The sea is HIS, and HE made it, and his hands formed the dry land.' *Isaiah* xlv. 18. 'For thus saith JEHOVAH that created the heavens, GOD himself that formed the earth and made it—I am JEHOVAH and there is NONE ELSE.' *Jer.* xxvii. 5. 'Thus saith JEHOVAH *Lord* of hosts, the GOD of Israel—I have made the earth, the man and the beast that are upon the ground, by MY great power, and MY outstretched arm.' *Rev.* iv. 11. 'THOU art worthy, O LORD, to receive glory and honour and power; for THOU hast created all things.' *Neh.* ix. 6. 'THOU, even THOU art JEHOVAH alone; THOU hast made heaven, the heaven of heaven with all their hosts, the earth and all things that are therein, the seas and all that is therein.

Acts iv. 24. 'Sovereign Lord, THOU art GOD, who madest heaven and earth and the sea, and all that in them is.'*—I infer from this, that if (contrary to the language of the Apostles, in the last instance,) it was not God, but His holy servant Jesus, who created the heaven, earth, and sea, and all things in them, we may reasonably expect this singular fact to be declared unambiguously and by proper authority.

Secondly, the highly important and striking *change*, which was so suddenly produced, by the Christian dispensation, in the *moral* condition and prospects of the Gentile world, is spoken of by the Apostle Paul as a *creation;* and of *this* creation Jesus *was* the immediate agent. The Apostle, speaking of Christian believers says, *Eph.* ii. 10. 'For we are his workmanship, having been CREATED through Christ Jesus, to good works;' and in *v.* 15, speaking of the union of the Jews and Gentiles, he says that Christ abolished by his death the cause of enmity, 'in order to CREATE in himself, of the two, one new man.' In ch. iii. 9, he says that God 'hath CREATED all things,' meaning, if we judge from the connexion, created them anew to holiness; and in ch. iv. 24, he employs an expression which at once deter-

* See among other places *Gen.* i. *Job.* ix. 8, 9. *Ps.* viii. 1. 3. xix. 1. xxiv. 1, 2. xxxiii. 6. 9. lxxxix. 11. cxlviii. 4—6. *Is.* xl. 26. xlv. 7. xlviii. 13. *Jer.* x. 12. *Amos* iv. 13. *Acts* xiv. 15. xvii. 24. (comp. *v.* 31). If any one will examine the phraseology in these passages, he will perceive, that if the Apostle in *Col.* i. 16. meant to ascribe the *natural* creation to Christ, he has not done it in the language usually employed, (and employed even by himself in the last two passages,) respecting the natural creation.

mines that he sometimes, at least, spoke of the *moral change* which had occurred, as a creation: 'To be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and to put on the new man, which is CREATED, according to God, in righteousness and true holiness.' In like manner, in *Col.* iii. 10, he says, 'and have put on the new *man*, which is renewed in knowledge, according to the image of Him who CREATED him.'—Agreeably to this phraseology, the Apostle says, 2 *Cor.* v. 17. 'If any man be in Christ, he is a NEW CREATURE,' or 'there is a NEW CREATION;' and *Gal.* vi. 15. 'For in Christ Jesus, neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a NEW CREATION.'

The change of state experienced by the Heathens in consequence of faith in Jesus, can hardly be calculated by those who scarcely remember the time when they did not know the leading truths of the Gospel. The Gentile believers had new hopes, new views, new desires; and the commencement of the change of mind, and indeed the change of state itself, was often instantaneous, produced by what they saw before their eyes, of the immediate agency of divine power. It was a change from darkness to light; from debasing ignorance, to a knowledge of the sublimest truths: it was a change from impurity of heart, to the desire after holiness; from earthly pleasures and hopes, to the prospect of an inheritance unfading in the heavens. How happy and full of rich and glorious

privilege was their new condition; the Greatest and Best of beings, their Father, their merciful and gracious Father; the living and exalted Jesus, their Lord and Saviour, their Friend and elder Brother;* the way of duty cleared; the hopes of heaven, of pardon and everlasting life, distinctly sanctioned and firmly fixed upon a sure foundation.—It seems to me almost impossible to think of these things, and hesitate to admit that this *moral renovation* was most justly represented by the Apostle as a *new creation*.†

From the preceding considerations I maintain, that the principles of interpretation stated at the beginning of this Part (see Chap. IV.) require us to interpret passages which speak of the creation by Jesus Christ, as referring to this new creation. In this, Jesus *was* the honoured *instrument* of the Father's goodness; in the natural creation, all was effected by the *fiat* of the Almighty.

It has, however, been thought by some, that as the mighty works which are expressly ascribed to the power of God, and among others the spiritual regeneration of mankind, were nevertheless wrought by Christ as the *immediate* instrumental agent, performing them by the power which God gave him, so in reference to the natural creation, Christ might have been the

* *John* xx. 17. *Rom.* viii. 17. *Heb.* ii. 11.

† The reader who wishes to examine this subject more minutely, will do well to consult a very valuable sermon entitled *The Nature, Origin, and Effect of the Creation by Jesus Christ;* by Russell Scott; as well as the authors referred to by him.

immediate though subordinate agent, creating all things by the power which Jehovah gave him; and yet that it may be strictly said that the creation was the work of Jehovah.—This hypothesis has the advantage of keeping near to the great fundamental principle of Revelation, that there is but ONE *Supreme*, ONE *First Cause*—JEHOVAH, the FATHER; but it is inconsistent with all those passages, which, speaking of Jehovah alone, attribute to him the creation of the world, and in terms which exclude all subordinate agency.

True it is that, in the great order of providence, subordinate agency is continually employed to effect the purposes of HIM 'of whom and through whom and to whom are all things;' and if Revelation had declared that this world or system was created by one subordinate agent, and others by others, and so on, we should have had nothing to do but to receive the truth, and adore the wisdom which so ordained it, and the power of the BLESSED AND ONLY POTENTATE from whom all other causes derive their agency and their efficacy. But in the case we are considering, either Christ was the Maker of ALL worlds and beings, or the passages on which this doctrine rests prove *nothing* respecting the *natural* creation. And when we think of worlds and systems, extending through the immeasurable fields of space in an infinite progression, some so distant from us, that, if created at our creation, the first light from them, travelling as it does with inconceiv-

able velocity, cannot yet have reached our globe, of others as far remote beyond them, and each of these countless millions of worlds peopled with innumerable tribes of living beings, (often more than can be numbered even within the little sphere of distinct vision,)—the understanding as well as the imagination seems involuntarily and necessarily to reject the supposition, that in the exertion of Almighty Power, by which all these worlds and beings were called into existence, *any* subordinate agency was employed. This surely was the work of JEHOVAH ALONE. By his word were the heavens made. He spake and it was done.

And in this conclusion we are fully borne out by express Revelation. Reason and Revelation, when fairly questioned, and their evidence justly appreciated, will not be found to oppose one another in their directions. Both have their source in the Father of Lights; and the brighter effulgence of the one, only makes us see more, and see more clearly, than the fainter rays of the other. I have already (p. 161) cited sufficient evidence to show that the natural creation is expressly referred by Scripture to Jehovah himself. If, after carefully weighing these testimonies, the serious inquirer still hesitate, I refer him, (as in my judgment decisive and exclusive,) to the words of Jehovah himself, by his Prophet Isaiah (ch. xliv. 24); 'Thus saith JEHOVAH thy Redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb, I am Jehovah that maketh all

things, that stretcheth forth the heavens ALONE, that spreadeth abroad the earth BY MYSELF.'

Here then I take my stand, with the fullest confidence, and maintain it to be the great principle of Revelation, that *without any instrument or subordinate agent, by his own power,* ALONE, *and* BY HIMSELF, JEHOVAH, *the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, created the heavens and the earth and all that in them is.*

Revelation cannot contradict itself; and the conclusion inevitably follows, that whatever be the precise meaning of the passages adduced by the opponents of Unitarianism, they *cannot* mean that Jesus Christ, the SON and SERVANT of JEHOVAH, created the heavens and the earth and all that in them is.

John i. 3. "All things were made (εγενετο) by him; and without him was not any thing made which was made." *Ib.* v. 10. "The world was made by him."

Were it consistent with the uniform use of γινομαι by St. John, and the almost uniform use of it in the New Testament, to translate it *make* in the sense of *create*, yet for the foregoing reasons, as well as from the connexion (which obviously refers to Jesus as the Logos, the Declarer of the purposes of God,)* I should unhesitatingly refer these words to the *new creation.* In the sense of *create*, however, I regard the common translation as not justifiable, for the following reasons. (1) St. John *never* uses the word γινομαι in the

* See p. 60—67.

sense of *create*. (2) There is no clear instance in which it is used, in this sense, in other parts of the New Testament, though the word occurs in it about 700 times.* (3) It is scarcely, if at all, sanctioned by the usage of the Septuagint.†

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* Mr. Simpson in his valuable Explanation of *John* i. 1—18, says, p. 27, "Nor can I find that it occurs in this sense," *viz.* of proper original creation, "throughout the whole New Testament, excepting in the two following instances: *James* iii. 9. *Heb.* iv. 3." It does not appear to me that either of these cases is fully in point. In *Heb.* iv. 3. 'his works were finished (γενηθεντων) from the foundation of the world,' if we interpret the expression by *v.* 4. and by the sense, must mean, 'his creative *operations* were *done* or ended, not, 'his works (the *effects* of such operations) were *created*.' As to *James* iii. 9. 'men, that are made (γεγονοτας) after the likeness of God,' it certainly may be referred to the original creation of the human race; but it may also properly mean, 'men who are (or, are become) according to the likeness of God;' James always uses γινομαι to signify *to be* or *to become*, and the connexion refers the expression to men then existing. Perhaps, but I lay no stress upon it, by 'men who are become according to the likeness of God,' the Apostle particularly means, Christian believers; for the Jews often cursed them in their synagogues. (See Macknight.) *Heb.* xi. 3, has also been adduced to show that γινομαι is sometimes used in the sense of proper original creation; but without sufficient grounds. Mr. Simpson takes a very interesting view of this passage in his Essay, Vol. II. p. 179. His paraphrase of it begins as follows. "By the Scriptures of the Old Testament we perceive that the several divine dispensations from the beginning of the world to the coming of Christ, were knit together into one entire scheme by a principle of faith, under each of them, in a future reward of piety and righteousness. This was appointed to be the bond of union, that the gospel might not seem to arise from any sensible appearances which would evidently indicate such a result to those who lived under previous dispensations;" &c. I think this eminent scripturalist wrong, however, in his interpretation of ῥηματι Θεου *the word—of God*, which seems to me simply to mean by divine appointment. I was led (in 1801) to examine in detail the *scriptural* sense of γινομαι, by a suspicion that the common translation and interpretation of *John* i. 3. 10, are not justifiable; and I was gratified with finding my conclusions, above stated, so much supported by independent examination.

† The Septuagint uses γινομαι three times only as the translation of ברא *to create*, and of those, once only in the sense of *creation*, *Gen.* ii. 4; and even in this, there is room for doubt as to the meaning which the Greek translator affixed to it. The other two

As the Evangelist had just spoken of this illustrious Declarer of the purposes of God, as being *with* God, favoured with direct manifestations of his will, the third verse may be justly rendered, 'All things came by him,' &c. and this is fully justified by St. John's own use of γινομαι;* or it may be properly rendered, also agreeably to his use of the word, 'All things' (relative to the new dispensation)† 'were done by him; and without him was not any thing done which hath been done;' and this rendering I have employed in my paraphrase in p. 63.

Respecting the tenth verse, the circumstances require a different rendering.‡ Κοσμος *(the world)* according to the almost uniform usage of St. John, and agreeably to the next clause, signifies *the world of mankind*, not the natural world;§

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instances are *Exod.* xxxiv. 10. *Is.* xlviii. 7.—It is frequently employed as the translation of עשה, *to make, to do, to form*, but *never* when that word implies *creation*. It is also very frequently employed in the sense of *become*.

* Γινομαι signifies *to come*, in the following instances: ch. i. 17. vi. 18. 19. 25. x. 35. xiii. 2. xxi. 4. (of which i. 17. and x. 35. are peculiarly in point.) It signifies *to be done* in at least the following instances, xv. 7. xix. 36.

† The following passages sufficiently show that τα παντα *(all things)* may and often must be taken in a very restricted sense: *Matt.* xi. 27. (comp. *John* xv. 15.) xix. 27. *Luke* xxi. 32. *John* xiv. 26. 1 *Cor.* vi. 12. 2 *Cor.* v. 17. *Phil.* iv. 13. 1 *Tim.* vi. 17. 1 *John* ii. 20, 27. *Rev.* xxi. 5.—*John* xiv. 26. and 1 *John* ii. 20. 27. are peculiarly in point, as denoting all things relative to the Christian dispensation.

‡ This is no objection to either, for in *v.* 6. the Evangelist uses it in a sense different from either: 'there was (εγενετο) a man sent from God.'

§ "Κοσμος occurs in the Gospel of John about 78 times, and about 24 times in his Epistles, which is oftener than any other writer in the N.T. uses it; yet in all these there are only two instances in which it is applied to the original creation, both of which

and he frequently uses γινομαι *(become)* to denote *change of state*:* the expression ὁ κοσμος δι' αυτου εγενετο might therefore justly, but somewhat freely, be rendered, 'mankind were brought by him into a new state.'—If we translate εγενετο *became* (or *was*), and may be allowed to supply the ellipsis from the preceding verse, we may then render the clause, 'the world became (or was) *enlightened* by him.'† The two renderings co-

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occur in the same chapter. *John* xvii. 5. 24. Κοσμος is used in this sense also, *Rev.* xiii. 8. xvii. 8. These are the only instances I can find in which κοσμος is applied by John to the original creation of the world, and in these the signification is decisively pointed out." Simpson's Explanation, p. 35.

* See ch. i. 12. ii. 9. v. 4. 6. 9. 14. viii. 33. ix. 22. 27. 39. xii. 36. 42. xvi. 20. This is a very frequent sense of the word in the Septuagint.

† Dr. Wardlaw (*Discourses on the Socinian Controversy*, p. 106) indulges himself in a strain of sarcastic remark on this interpretation that seems little suited to the pulpit, and to which I make no reply. What is *criticism*, is contained in the following sentences: "There are not a few unnecessary, and there are some injurious "supplements in our ordinary English Version; but certainly there "is nothing of the kind that can bear a comparison with this. I only "ask a person who has learned the first elements of *English*, what "he should think of a writer, who, intending to express the senti-"ment that the world was enlightened by Jesus Christ, should "write the substantive verb, *was*, and leave the word *enlightened*, "not only the principal word, but absolutely the only word by "which his meaning could be determined, to be supplied by the "reader! Yet this is precisely what these critics suppose the in-"spired historian to have done in the present instance." As this mode of interpretation in the Improved Version appears to have originated in a criticism of my own, and Mr. Belsham, in his Calm Inquiry adopts it "with some hesitation," I think it necessary to make some remarks on Dr. Wardlaw's strictures, first premising that I never myself proposed πεφωτισμενος as the supplement, for I suppose the Apostle would have written φωτισθεις (as in *Heb.* v. 9. τελειωθεις εγενετο,) or φωτιζομενος, according to the more usual construction.—(1) In reference to the "*injurious*" character of the supplement, I would ask Dr. Wardlaw whether he thinks it worse than that of the P.V. in *Acts* vii. 59? 'calling on *God*, and saying, Lord Jesus receive my spirit.' (2) I will apply Dr. W.'s mode of criticism to another case, with a cognate verb, and ask

incide as to meaning, and both are fully justified by the matter of fact. The common rendering as usually interpreted, (referring it to the original creation,) is inconsistent with the Apostle's

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what we are to think of a person, who, when he meant to convey the idea that he was a Roman citizen by birth-right, merely said, (*Acts* xxii. 28) 'But I was even born' (εγω δε και γεγεννημαι), leaving "the only word by which his meaning could be determined, to be supplied by the" hearer. (3) I observe that the supplement in this last case is much less obvious from the immediately preceding clause, than that in *John* i. 10. The Tribune had said, 'For a great sum I obtained this citizenship' (την πολιτειαν ταυτην): The Apostle replies, 'But I was even born.' He obviously means, 'born *a Roman citizen*;' but the supplement is to be sought in the first *question* of the *Tribune*, not in his own words.

Such supplements are continually to be made by the reader or hearer; and they are frequent in reference to γινομαι, but still more (as might be expected) in the use of ειμι. In the passage referred to by Mr. Belsham and myself (*Matt.* xxiii. 15), it is presumed, and I think correctly, that οταν γενηται means 'when he is become:' the verb in the preceding clause is ποιησαι I have had occasion to notice several instances in which classical authors use γινομαι with an ellipsis; for instance, when Lucian represents Menalaus as telling Proteus that it is inconceivable that a sea-god should become fire (πυρ γινεσθαι), he makes Proteus reply, "Do not be surprised, Menalaus, γαρ γιγνομαι, for I am become *fire*." Again, Xenophon (*Anab.* lib. I.) tells us that when Cyrus asked Orontes if he would again become an enemy to his brother, and a faithful friend to himself, Orontes replied, "Even if I were to become *so*, ει γενοιμην, I could not any longer, Cyrus, be so regarded by you." Herodotus (see *Porti Lex. Ion.*) uses γινομαι with a remarkable but not unusual *subauditur* (*e.g.* of προς αγαθον, or καλως,) making it denote *to turn out* WELL. Vigerus adduces several similar instances from Xenophon, Thucydides, and Plato. Every one, indeed, who has read the Greek authors with observation, must agree with Vigerus, that γινομαι is used with extreme latitude, and that scarcely any other word has so many idiomatical constructions.

This introductory portion of St. John's Gospel is very elliptical; the eighth verse presents one instance which every one will acknowledge: 'He was not the Light, but *he came* that he might testify concerning the Light.' In the tenth, if the nominative of the verb be not found in the preceding verse, there is one of the various proofs which this Gospel affords, that the Apostle wrote with his mind full of his subject, his beloved Master, and referred to *him* without considering the minute niceties of grammatical construction: he often is obscure in construction, and yet perfectly perspicuous in import. If we take the subject from v. 9, then it runs

phraseology; and the common interpretation inconsistent with various parts of the Scriptures. (See p. 161—167.)

1 *Cor.* viii. 6. "But to us *there is but* one God, the Father, of (εἰ) whom *are* all things, and we in (εις) him: and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by (δια) whom *are* all things, and we by (δια) him." See p. 37.

No one can suppose that this passage affords any *proof* of the doctrine, that Jesus was the agent in the natural creation; all that can be admitted is, that the phraseology will *suit* it.

Eph. iii. 9. 'In God who created all things' "by Jesus Christ."

The connexion, as has been observed, directs us to refer this passage to the new creation: but however this be, it proves nothing as to the point in question; since, in all probability, the words δια του Ιησου Χριστου *by Jesus Christ* were not written by the Apostle. See Griesbach, who rejects them from his text as certainly spurious.

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thus, That which coming into the world enlightens every man, 'was in the world, and the world became—by him,' &c.; and the ellipsis would, *in meaning*, be just as easily supplied by the original readers of St. John's Gospel as this is by the English reader.

Nevertheless as this construction is not exactly borne out by any instance I know, (*Acts* xxii. 28. is most like it,) and *made* or *formed* (*anew*) accords with the continual import of the word, and (equally well with the former) with the analogy of Scripture, I give a preference to this rendering, and have accordingly employed it in p. 64.

But if I could not see *any* clue to the Apostle's precise meaning, I could not believe that he intended to represent the SERVANT of Jehovah as creating the heavens and the earth, in direct opposition to the declaration of JEHOVAH by his Prophet, that HE HIMSELF *created them* ALONE and BY HIMSELF.—"*I believe in* GOD *the* FATHER *Almighty*, MAKER *of Heaven and Earth*:" and to *this* I say, solemnly, and with full conviction, "As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be; world without end: Amen." (3d Ed.)

Col. i. 16, 17. "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him and for him: And he is before all things; and by him all things consist."

If this passage do not prove a doctrine which is so much in opposition with the general tenor of the Scriptures, the doctrine itself must surely be given up by every Scripturalist. To investigate it, we must take it in its connexion; and I shall give the literal rendering of Griesbach's text.

In the introductory verses, the Apostle expresses his gratitude that the Colossians possessed the hopes of the Gospel, which had then reached *the whole world*, and was bringing forth its proper fruit; and the pleasure which he felt from their affection towards himself. He tells them that it was the object of his prayers, that they might fully possess the knowledge of the divine will, that they might act so as to obtain the approbation of God, and derive from Him strength to endure patiently to the end: 'giving 'thanks to the Father,' he continues (*v.* 12) 'who 'hath made us fit for the participation of the 'inheritance of the saints in light; [13] who hath 'delivered us from the power of darkness, and 'hath translated *us* into the kingdom of his be-'loved Son, [14] in whom we have redemption, '*even* the forgiveness of sins; [15] who is the Image 'of the invisible God, the First-born of the whole 'creation.* [16] For in (εν) him all things† are

* Πασης κτισεως—so in *Eph.* iii. 15. πασα πατρια is correctly rendered *the whole family.*

† It is a position laid down by many Expositors, that by *things*

phraseology; and the common interpretation inconsistent with various parts of the Scriptures. (See p. 161—167.)

1 *Cor.* viii. 6. "But to us *there is but* one God, the Father, of (εξ) whom *are* all things, and we in (εις) him: and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by (δια) whom *are* all things, and we by (δια) him." See p. 37.

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the Apostle frequently denotes *persons*. This will be more correctly stated by saying that he uses adjectives and pronouns with the *neuter termination* in reference to *persons;* for there is no word in the original corresponding to *things*, in such expressions as *all things* (*τα παντα.*) This usage of neuter adnouns may have arisen from two circumstances: that in the Hebrew *all* nouns are either masculine or feminine; and, especially, that the Greek not only uses *masculine and feminine terminations* where the *sense* is *neuter*, but often employs *neuter terminations* where the *sense* is *common* to male and female. In fact, the *neuter* seems to have been sometimes used as a kind of *common* gender (to avoid noticing the distinction of sex,) as we ourselves sometimes use our neuter pronoun. If *persons* can be *τεκνα του θεου*, there is no reason why *persons* might not be spoken of *μωρα, ισχυρα*, &c. See 1 *Cor.* i. 20—28, which greatly illustrates the passage under consideration. (3d Ed.)

* I think it cannot reasonably be denied, that the meaning of the phrase, 'things in heaven and things on earth,' is the same here as in *v.* 20. The point then is, whether, from the Scriptures, we have sufficient reason to believe, that the gospel dispensation was designed to reconcile *the inhabitants of heaven to* GOD; if not, which I think very clear, and, if we abide by the authority of the Writer to the Hebrews, indisputable, (see p. 52,) 'things in *heaven*' must mean men of some particular civil or religious class, as well as 'things on earth.' That this is the fact is obvious from *Eph.* i. 10, compared with ii. 11—18; and these passages also show what is meant by the expression in question, *viz.* the two great bodies of Jews and Gentiles, who in the Gospel were united into one body: 'things in heaven' denoting the Jews, once the peculiar people of God, and 'things on earth' of course the rest of the world. See Locke on *Eph.* i. 10, who refers to *Dan.* viii. 10. *Luke* xxi. 26, as cases in which the appellation *heaven* is given to the Jewish nation. See also Simpson's Essays on the Language of Scripture III. § 9. 15.—On *Dan.* viii. 10. (where the prophecy refers to the persecution of the Jews by Antiochus Epiphanes,) Prebendary Lowth observes, "The Christian Church is called the *Jerusalem which is above*, *Gal.* iv. 26. and the Governors of it are styled *Angels*, *Rev.* i. 20. In like manner the *Host of Heaven* means here the *Jewish* Church, and particularly the Priests and Levites, who are called the *Host of Heaven*, (a name proper to Angels,) from their continual attendance on God's service in the Temple, in imitation of the Angelical office." I require no other vindication of our reference of *things in heaven* to the Jewish church; and I am quite satisfied that such was the reference of the Apostle.

† Or, *the visible and the invisible*, *τα ὁρατα και τα αορατα.* 'Ορατος is no where else employed in the N.T. In the Septuagint it occurs in the following passages 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 21. 1 *Chron.* xi. 23. *Job* xxxiv. 26. xxxvii. 21. In the first two it is used in the sense

'dominions, or dignities, or authorities; all things
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of *remarkable* or *conspicuous:* in the third it denotes *seen* or *observed:* in the last it is used with a negative, denoting that the resplendent brightness of the clear sky cannot be gazed at, ουχ ὁρατον το φως. Ὁρατος means either *seen* or *invisible.* Αορατος means *unseen*, or *invisible.* Besides the present passage, it is used only in the following: *Rom.* i. 20 *Col.* i. 15. 1 *Tim.* i. 17. *Heb.* xi. 27. In all these it is well translated *invisible*, as it refers to HIM and HIS perfections who, in the strictest sense, *is* invisible. In the Septuagint it only occurs three times: *Gen.* i. 2. where it is used in reference to the *earth*, apparently implying that it was *hidden* by the waters, or by the darkness which covered it; *Is.* xlv. 3. αορατους θησαυρους, *hidden treasures:* and 2 *Macc.* ix. 5. where a grievous disorder in the bowels is called αορατος πληγη an *unseen* or *hidden* plague. On the whole there is no room for doubt that αορατος is applicable to any person or thing which is *concealed from sight*, which is *unseen*, whether or not strictly *invisible.*—Ὁρατος signifying *conspicuous* or *deserving of observation*, αορατος might signify that which is *not worth looking at*,—ουκ αξια του ὁρασθαι, as Schleusner (*Lex. Vet. Test.*) informs us Severus explained the αορατα as used by the Septuagint in *Gen* i. 2: but for this meaning I know no other authority.

With what reference the Apostle employed these terms, is the difficulty. (1) Many say, "No doubt he meant that Christ Jesus was the Creator of all those worlds and beings which to the eye of mortals are invisible." This, however, is impossible, because these JEHOVAH created ALONE and BY HIMSELF. (2) Others have considered it as referring to *angels*, and, as implying that all the heavenly hosts have been brought into a new state through the instrumentality of Christ. If this doctrine were *taught* in the Scriptures, this passage might be interpreted by it; but it is no where expressed, and cannot be received on mere inference. (3) Mr. Lindsay (*Sequel*, p. 481) considers the Apostle as employing the Jewish notions respecting angels, "to set forth the superior power of Christ to all such powers, real or imaginary, and the excellency of the Gospel above the former dispensations:" and he adds, "The same thing is declared, and the allusion is the same, *Eph.* i. 20." The cases, however, are not parallel; and I think no sense can be admitted which does not represent the *unseen* or *invisible* beings as having undergone a great *change of state*, a *new creation.* (4) Mr. Belsham, in his very valuable *Exposition of the Epistles of Paul*, considers *visible* as denoting "the Jews, who formerly stood in a visible relation to God as theirs by covenant," and *invisible* as denoting "the Gentiles, who had no external badge of communion with him."—In that case the clause adds nothing to the preceding. (5) By the following enumeration of authorities, the Apostle appears to have meant earthly rulers and dignitaries, whether ecclesiastical or civil, (of whom many, of various ranks, must have embraced the Christian

'him; [17] and he is before all, and all things are
'united* in (εν) him: [18] and he is the Head of the
'body, *even* the church; who is the Beginning,
'the First-born from the dead, that he might in
'all things have the pre-eminence. [19] For it
'pleased *the Father* that all fulness should dwell
'in him, [20] and through (δια) him to reconcile all
'things to Himself, (making peace by the blood
'of his cross, through him,) whether those on
'earth or those in heaven.'

Against referring the 16th and 17th verses to the original natural creation, the following objections lie. (1) The connexion refers entirely to Gospel blessings, and to the instrumentality of Jesus in bringing mankind into a state of reconciliation and blessedness. (2) The manner of expression essentially differs from the usual manner of expression respecting the natural creation, (see p. 161). (3) If the Apostle had

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faith;) and we may consider ὁρατα *(seen)* as referring to men in ordinary walks of life; and αορατα (*unseen* or *concealed*) as denoting those who lived in the seclusion of state and religious solemnity. In support of this interpretation it should be observed, that the Rulers of the East lived in peculiar seclusion from their subjects; and farther, that the Priesthood exercised many of their most solemn functions (both among Jews and Gentiles,) completely out of the view of the common worshippers. This interpretation I employ in my paraphrase. (6) I do not think it without probability that by αορατα (*unseen* or *invisible*) the Apostle meant those in *Hades*, the *unseen* state, the state of the dead, who had already fallen asleep in Jesus, looking for a resurrection to eternal life: in this view τα ὁρατα και τα αορατα means *the living and the dead.* (3d Ed.)

* Συνεστηκε—whatever meaning we here affix to this verb, it must differ from the Apostle's use of it in every other place. The connexion obviously points to the one here given; which is a fully justifiable one, both as to derivation and actual usage.—Comp. Eph. i. 10.

intended to reveal the supposed fact, it is surely reasonable to believe that he would have expressed himself unambiguously, by saying, for instance, (instead of what he does say in *v.* 16,) "For he *(i.e. Jesus)* made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are in them," as in *Acts* xiv. 15, we find that he actually said, 'the LIVING GOD, who made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are in them;' (4) The Apostle could not mean to assert that the SERVANT of Jehovah did that which JEHOVAH declares HE HIMSELF did, ALONE, and by HIMSELF. (See p. 167.)

The following considerations, in connexion with those just stated, lead me, without hesitation, to refer these verses to the new or moral creation. (1) The connexion directs to this reference: the whole Epistle respects the blessings and moral effects of the Christian dispensation, and the instrumentality of Jesus Christ in executing the gracious purposes of God. (2) The Apostle by the expression 'all *things* in heaven or on earth,' obviously means all *persons*. He himself uses the same expression in *v.* 20, in a connexion which necessarily restricts it to *persons:* and what is said in *v.* 20, (especially if compared with 2 *Cor.* v. 17—19, and *Eph.* ii. 10—18,) renders it exceedingly probable, that the creation spoken of in *v.* 16, is the moral or new creation. (3) After speaking of the great moral change produced among the Gentiles by the Gospel, (*Eph.* ii. 10), the Apostle says, 'For we

are his workmanship, created, in (εν) Christ Jesus, to good works.' So also (2 *Cor.* v. 17.) 'If any man be in (εν) Christ, he is a new creature.'

Following this plan of interpretation, and employing the Apostle's own words in other parts of his Epistles, particularly of those which were written about the same time, his meaning may probably be correctly represented as follows.

Ver. 14. In whom (*i.e.* God's beloved Son) we have redemption—the forgiveness of our sins: [15] who is the Image of the invisible God—HIS Representative to mankind, manifesting HIS glorious and gracious perfections, and the Ambassador of his love and mercy; and the First-born of the whole creation—pre-eminent among all who share in the inestimable blessings of the Gospel and partake of its spiritual regeneration, 'the First-born among many brethren,' and, under God, and by HIS appointment, the Author of eternal salvation to all who obey him. [16] For all who by faith in him enter into his universal and everlasting dispensation, are created anew to holiness and blessedness;—both Jews and Gentiles,—both those in the usual walks of life, and those who live in the seclusion of state, or who exercise their functions in sacred privacy,* (however exalted their greatness, dominion, dignity, and authority,†)—all who have embraced

* Or, both the living and the dead: see p. 176, Note.

† Θρονοι, κυριοτητες, αρχαι, εξουσιαι, *thrones, dominions, dignities, authorities,* denote *persons* possessing offices of power, dominion, dignity, or authority, of various ranks, ecclesiastical as well as civil. *Thrones* need not be confined to *sovereigns,* but may

the sanctifying privileges of his Gospel have been anew created *through him*, as the Agent of that Great and Gracious Being who by him hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings, and *to him* as his subjects and peculiar people, zealous of good works. [17] And he is Lord of all; and in him, as the bond of union, all are united, whatever be their civil or religious distinctions,—for in his all-comprehensive dispensation 'there is neither Gentile nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free, but Christ is all and in all.' [18] And he is the Head of the Church, the Beginning of all its privileges, the First-born from the dead, that in every respect he might have the pre-eminence. [19] For it pleased his God and Father that all the fulness of Gospel blessings should dwell in him, and be conveyed by him; [20] and through him to bring into a state of favour with himself, the whole body of mankind, both Jews and Gentiles; he having, by his last great act of love and obedience, completed the ministry of peace and reconciliation.

Such appears to me to be the meaning of the Apostle. The Gospel, he says (*v.* 23), was preached to every creature under heaven. He had seen the most glorious and blessed effects arising from the diffusion of it: he had himself been the honoured instrument in some of its most illustrious triumphs: and he here speaks of its

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justly be referred to the higher subordinate magistrates and judges'—such *e.g.* as the Roman Proconsuls.

power, and of the high dignity of his *exalted* Lord, in terms which were calculated to impress the minds of the Colossian Christians with his own just sense of them.

I lay no stress, in a doctrinal point of view, upon my explanations of the separate clauses of the passage: but on one point the evidence appears to me perfectly satisfactory, that it has not, and indeed cannot have, any reference to the original natural creation;* and that therefore it must refer to the great change effected in the spiritual condition of mankind, by that dispensation of mercy and 'righteousness and true holiness,' of which Christ was appointed the Mediator by his God and Father;—a dispensation of which the Apostle himself saw only the commencement, but which he knew, by the prophecies of old, should comprehend in one vast dominion, 'all people, nations, and languages;' which he saw there foretold, in the words of Jehovah himself, 'Behold I create new heavens and a new earth;' and which the spirit of Jesus had taught him would be conducted by his exalted Lord, till that glorious period when GOD shall be ALL IN ALL.'—See Chap. VI. Sect. 3.

* Before Dr. S. Clarke called the reference of this passage to the new creation "a very forced sense," he should have carefully compared the phraseology of this Epistle with that of the Epistle to the Ephesians.—From the considerations already stated, I feel no hesitation in the conviction, that the reference of it to the original creation is attended not only with difficulties, but with inconsistencies; and that that which this eminent Critic reprobates, though not without difficulties, is perfectly consistent with the Scriptures in general, and accordant with the phraseology of the Apostle.

Heb. i. 2. "By whom also he made the worlds:" δι' ὁν και τους αιωνας εποιησεν.

Αιων, in the New Testament, never signifies the *material world*, but *age* or *duration of time*. The clause has been translated, 'for whom also he constituted the ages,' meaning that the preceding ages were "intended to prepare the way for the age or dispensation of the Messiah;" or it may be translated 'by whom also he constituted the age,' that is "of the Messiah, eminently distinguished for moral and religious advantages."*

Heb. i. 10—12. 'And, Thou, LORD, in the beginning didst lay the foundations of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thy hands: they shall perish; but thou remainest: and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou change them and they shall be changed: but thou art the same; and thy years shall not fail.'

This is a citation from the 102d Psalm, where it is obviously addressed to JEHOVAH, that Being of whom the Author of the Epistle had just spoken (*v.* 9) as the GOD of Christ. By his preceding citation he had referred to the perpetual sovereignty of the Messiah, and to God as the source of this exalted appointment: he here adduces a passage in which God is addressed as almighty, eternal, and unchangeable, *obviously*

* The latter, which is that of Mr. Simpson, depends on the position, that "in the Hebrew idiom, and agreeably to the prevailing style of this Epistle to the Hebrews, the true signification of αιωνας here is *the age*, by way of eminence." In one respect it has a great advantage over the other; it does not require the unusual, but not unjustified, force of δια, as signifying *on account of*, with a genitive. For the authority for the first mentioned interpretation, see Mr. Belsham's *Calm Inquiry* or his *Exposition*.

(as it appears to me) to support his previous declaration respecting the dominion of the Messiah. *This* shall be everlasting, (is the argument,) because that eternal almighty Being who gave it him, is unchangeably the same.*

The only difficulty attending the passage is, that the previous quotation (*v.* 8) is introduced by the words, 'But unto the Son *he saith*' (or rather, *the Scripture saith)*, and that this citation is connected with it by 'And.' If with Mr. Yates we translate the first clause of *v.* 8, 'But concerning the Son,' as in *v.* 7, 'concerning the angels,'† the abruptness of the citation in the 10th verse does not appear to me to be removed. If, however, I were unable to see how or why the Author introduced this last citation, I could not, without the most undeniable evidence, suppose that he meant to speak of the SERVANT of Jehovah, —who (he himself says) was anointed by HIM above his fellows, and (iii. 2) was faithful to HIM who appointed him, and (v. 8) learned obe-

* It may contribute to show the force of the Author's quotation, if the Reader peruse here the prophetic description of the appointment of the Messiah to his sovereignty, by the 'Ancient of Days,' in *Dan.* vii. 9—14.—If *και* at the beginning of *Heb.* i. 10, be rendered *For*, (and that it has occasionally a *causal* force both in the Septuagint and the New Testament, see Schleusner's Lexicons,) the train of the argument is at once obvious. If not so translated, the *implied* object of the quotation is the same.

† See *Vindication of Unitarianism*, p. 197. There is no doubt that *προς τον υιον* may be rendered *concerning the Son;* and that in *v.* 7. *προς* is best rendered *concerning:* but that this preposition with an accusative is occasionally "used to denote an address to any one," see *Luke* xv. 22. *Acts* viii. 20. xv. 7. I have met with several instances in classical authors; but I suppose Mr. Yates's opinion to the contrary, respects the *scriptural* usage of *προς*.

dience by the things which he suffered, and (ii. 9.) tasted death for every man,—as the CREATOR of heaven and earth, FOR EVER AND UNCHANGEABLY THE SAME. And such evidence must not be sought in minute points of style and composition.

Heb. iii. 3. 'For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, in as much as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house.'

Οικος, *house* or *family*, is never used in the New Testament in reference to the material world. The argument of the Writer obviously is, that since God hath framed the family, and Moses was only a servant in the family, but Christ was a son, he who bears this near relation to the Founder of the family is worthy of more honour than Moses. The Author of the Epistle, so far from saying that Jesus *founded* the family, speaks of him (*v.* 2) as being 'faithful to Him who appointed (ποιησαντι) him,' and (*v.* 4) says that 'He who framed all things, is God.'

These eight passages are all, I believe, which *can* be adduced in favour of the doctrine, that Jesus was the agent of God in the creation of the world. Now of these, *John* i. 3. 10. *Heb.* i. 2. iii. 3. cannot be interpreted as having any reference to the original creation, without departure from the scriptural use of words; the true reading of *Eph.* iii. 9. prevents that passage from affording any support to the doctrine; in *Heb.* i. 10. Jesus is not addressed, but He who was indeed

the Creator of all things; and though 1 Cor. viii. 6. will admit of an explanation accordant with the doctrine, it in no way whatever requires it. The doctrine therefore rests for its proof upon *Col.* i. 16, 17: and that this *does not* really refer to the original material creation is to my mind exceedingly evident: indeed that it *cannot*, (whatever be its import,) I have no hesitation in maintaining from the scriptural evidence adduced in p. 161, 167.

SECT. III.

Those Passages which ascribe to our Lord Titles, Perfections, and Powers which are thought to be inconsistent with his Proper Humanity.

John xx. 31. 'But these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God.'

THIS epithet is given to our Lord about fifty times; and that of *Son*, implying the same thing, about forty times. It can scarcely I think be denied, that our Lord's frequent employment of the appellation *the Son* or *Son of God*, when speaking of himself, and the employment of it by others in reference to him, have a sufficient cause in the divine words at his baptism; and if that mode of expression had not been thus employed by Him who sent him, there would have been sufficient foundation, in the customary Hebrew phraseology, for the use of the appellation. Now there appears to me no reasonable

ground for doubt, that those important words, 'Thou art my beloved Son,' are to be interpreted by that customary phraseology; and no one who has given accurate attention to the subject can doubt, that, in the Jewish idiom, *Son of God* means no more than a *person favoured by God and peculiarly eminent as to character or privileges or office.* Out of the many passages which prove that the title has no respect to *nature*, I think it cannot be necessary to bring forwards more than the following. In *Hos.* i. 10, the Supreme Being is represented as saying of the *Israelites*, 'It shall come to pass that in the place where it was said unto them "Ye are not my people," there it shall be said unto them "Ye are the SONS of the Living God."' In ch. xi. 1, we have another similar expression, 'When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my SON out of Egypt.' In 2 *Sam.* vii. 14, we find Nathan directed to say respecting *Solomon*, in the name of God, 'I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever: I will be his Father, and he shall be MY SON.' The same honourable appellation is in various places in the New Testament given to *Christians*, sometimes, as it appears, with respect to their privileges, but, in general, principally with respect to their character. One striking passage will suffice as an instance, and will serve to show the amount of this Jewish idiom; 'For as many as are led by the spirit of God,' *i.e.* as the connexion shows, by a godly disposition, 'these are the SONS OF GOD.' *Rom.* viii. 14.

I think it evident from these and similar passages, that there is nothing in the exalted appellation *Son of God*, in any way implying that there was a peculiarity of *nature* in Jesus. Christians are said expressly to be 'heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ,'* who, again, is said to be 'the first-born among many BRETHREN;'† and if any, neglecting a widely prevalent Jewish idiom, and interpreting the expression by their own religious system, maintain that the expression does refer to *nature*, it is incumbent upon them to show the *scriptural* grounds of this position. I think they will find none.‡

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* *Rom.* viii. 17. † *Ib.* v. 29.

‡ *Luke* i. 35, is the only passage which is supposed to represent the miraculous conception of Jesus as the reason of his having this dignified title so peculiarly given to him. I think it most probable that the Gospel of Luke does not teach the miraculous conception of Jesus (see *App.* I.); and if it do not, the above supposition is totally unfounded. But even admitting that it were otherwise, the appellation would not in any way refer to superiority in nature, because the foundation of it would have no such reference, (see p. 21. *note*).—Schleusner (whom no one can suspect of being an Unitarian), after having pointed out several peculiarities in the scriptural use of the word *son*, says, "In the N.T. every one is called *son of God*, who is like God, beloved by him, and favoured by him with peculiar blessings, who truly and piously serves God, and obeys his will." He then states what he regards as the peculiar grounds of the application of the term to Christians, and to our Lord. In the last case he refers it in part (but without evidence) to peculiarity of *nature;* and he assigns as the reasons for the employment of the term in reference to Christ, the use of it in the O.T. in reference to the Messiah, and the phraseology of the O.T. which designated 'kings, magistrates, and in short all who were considered as holding the place of God among men, by the title *Sons of God.*" It was obviously in this last sense that Nathaniel employed the term, (see *John* i. 49. comp. *v.* 45); but I consider the words of our Lord (*John* x. 36) as assigning the ground and justification of his own employment of it; *viz. that the Father set him apart for a most important purpose, and sent him forth into the world to execute it.* —Respecting this appellation of our Lord, I beg to refer the Reader to a valuable Sermon by Mr. Kenrick on the subject of it.

John i. 18. "The ONLY-BEGOTTEN SON." ὁ μονογενης υιος.

On the import of this expression, which St. John alone uses in reference to our Lord, see p. 77, and p. 66, *notes.* This Apostle never uses *beloved* in reference to Christ, and apparently employs *only* in the place of it. He thus styles our Lord in ch. i. 18. iii. 16, 18. of his Gospel; and in ch. iv. 9. of his first Epistle. Perhaps also we may add *John* i. 14: but it appears more probable that here the Apostle uses the expression indefinitely and by comparison—'glory as of an Only Son from his Father.'

Some Trinitarians have considered μονογενης, *only* or *only-begotten*, when applied to Christ, as in no way referring to his divine nature, but to his miraculous birth:* but even supposing that this was in the strict sense miraculous, it appears most accordant with the style of a Jewish writer, to consider μονογενης as nearly synonymous with αγαπητος *beloved*, though somewhat more forcible than that word,—*beloved as an only Son.*—Recollecting that this Apostle was one of the favoured witnesses of our Lord's transfiguration, we may consider μονογενης as corresponding with the divine declaration, 'This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.'† We shall not, I am fully convinced, by this means lower the force of the Apostle's appellation; and we may, therefore, justly interpret μονογενης WELL-BELOVED SON.‡

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* See Parkhurst's Gr. Lex. † *Matt.* xvii. 5.

‡ The Hebrew word יחיד *only*, to which μονογενης corresponds,

Rom. viii. 32. 'He that spared not HIS OWN SON (*του ιδιου υιου*) but delivered him up for us all,' &c.

At the baptism of Christ, and at his transfiguration, the Divine Being, by a voice from heaven, declared him to be his '*beloved Son*;' and the expression '*own Son*' well accords with it. There is no scriptural ground for referring the appellation to any peculiarity of *nature*; it obviously denotes *peculiar love* and *approbation*. The force of it certainly is not greater than that of *only* or *only-begotten*, which has just been considered.

Rom. viii. 29. 'The FIRST BORN (*πρωτοτοκον*) among many brethren.'

The passage shows that, as to *nature*, there is nothing peculiar in the *sonship* of Jesus: all who are conformed to his likeness are his brethren. He is the *First-born*, inasmuch as he is pre-eminently excellent, the Head of the new family formed by his dispensation out of all nations, the

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is translated in the Septuagint *αγαπητος beloved* in *Gen.* xxii. 2. 12. 16. *Jer.* vi. 26. *Amos* viii. 10. *Zech.* xii. 10: *αγαπωμενος beloved* in *Prov.* iv. 3: *μονογενης only* in *Ps.* xxii. 20. xxv. 16. xxxv. 17: and *μονοτρωπος solitary* in *Ps.* lxvii. 7. In the first three instances it refers to Isaac, and is rendered *only* in the English version. In the N.T. *μονογενης* is used in reference to Isaac, *Heb.* xi. 17.

That the Apostle might use *μονογενης only*, in the sense of *αγαπητος beloved*, is obvious therefore from the Hebrew idiom: that he did not use it in the sense commonly affixed to the word *only-begotten* is abundantly clear from his own words in ch. i. 13, where he speaks of the believers in Christ as *begotten* (or *born*) *of God*, *εκ Θεου εγεννηθησαν*, and in the first Epistle ch. iii. 9. where he says, 'Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is *begotten* (or *born*) of God, *εκ του Θεου γεγεννηται*, and every one that loveth him that begat, *τον γεννησαντα* (*i.e.* God himself), loveth him also that is begotten of him, *τον γεγεννημενον εξ αυτου* (*i.e.* every believer in Jesus.) See also 1 *John* iii. 9. iv. 7. v. 18.

First who partook of its blessings, and the Agent in dispensing them to his brethren. He is called the *First-born* in the following passages: *Col.* i. 15: (see p. 178,) also in *v.* 18: 'the First-born from the dead,' as being the first who was raised from the dead to die no more: *Heb.* i. 6, probably for the same reason; and *Rev.* i. 5, certainly so.—The expression shows the amount of *only* or *only-begotten Son:* if he were the *First-born Son*, he could not, in any strict sense, be the *Only Son*.

Matt. xxvi. 64. 'Hereafter shall ye see the SON OF MAN sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.'

There can scarcely be a doubt that in this declaration before the Jewish Sanhedrim, our Lord refers to the sublime representation of the dignity and dominion given to the *Son of Man*, contained in *Dan.* vii. 9—14: and his use of the appellation here explains the reason of his frequent employment of it in other cases. It was designed to lead the attention of the people to his claims as the Messiah, before he himself expressly avowed them.* That the term was em-

* In the 2d Ed. I felt much disposed to fall in with Mr. Simpson's ingenious hypothesis, (see *Essays on Scripture*, Vol. II. p. 244—254.) that ὁ υἱος του ανθρωπου *(the Son of the Man)* was designed by our Lord to intimate his being the expected descendant of David. This Mr. S. mainly rests on the fact, that whenever the expression occurs in the Septuagint, it is without the article before either word. —As, however, the use of the article before the *governed* noun ανθρωπου is accordant with the general usage of the Greek language when the *governing* υἱος has it, nothing can be inferred from the fact. The true distinction is, between ὁ υἱος του ανθρωπου THE *Son of Man*, (referring I think to the prophetic description of

ployed by the Prophet, and by our Lord himself, in connexion with this exalted office, proves that this in no way implied a *nature* or a *sovereignty* beyond what might be possessed by a proper *human being:* and it deserves observation that the original word in Daniel, אנוש, "is the name appropriated to imply the frailty, sorrows, and mortality of human nature." It thus corresponds to σαρξ *flesh;* and it indicates that the exalted personage to whom the universal and everlasting dominion was GIVEN by the ANCIENT OF DAYS, was a 'MAN *of sorrows:*' we know he was the 'MAN *Christ Jesus.*'

Dr. Middleton considers this single appellation, (the manner in which it is employed being taken into account,) as an irrefragable proof of the Pre-existence and Divinity of Christ.—I suppose that most will agree with me in regarding this fact, as a singular and striking proof of the effect of preformed opinions, in warping the judgment of men of great learning and abilities. When persons can derive proofs of their own opinions from expressions which, in their plain and obvious meaning, are inconsistent with them, there is no common ground for argument. I was once told, that the doctrine of "Satisfaction by the atoning blood of Jesus" is to be found in five-

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Daniel, but still implying the proper humanity of the exalted person there described;) and υιος ανθρωπου A *Son of Man*, denoting expressly his being a *human being*. See p. 108.

N.B. In the quotation of *John* v. 27, in p. 108, the mark of citation has been accidentally omitted after MAN: it should have been thus—because he is a SON OF MAN,' that is, a *proper human being*. The Reader will oblige me by inserting it.

sixths of the New Testament. I proposed opening the New Testament in any part whatsoever, and counting the verses which have any apparent reference to it: my opponent replied, that if it be not *expressed* it is *implied.* "The learned Postellus," says Gregory Blunt, p. 103, "inferred, that there were 11,000 proofs of the Trinity in the Old Testament alone:" upon the above calculation, there are upwards of 6000 verses in the New Testament which contain the doctrine of Satisfaction; and upon Dr. Middleton's principles, the expression Son of Man, which occurs about 80 times, affords so many proofs of the pre-existence and divinity of Christ.

Mark xvi. 19. 'So then after the LORD had spoken to them.'

The word Κυριος *Lord* being constantly used in the Septuagint as the translation of Jehovah, and being frequently employed in the New Testament in reference to the Supreme Being, many have supposed that the application of it to Jesus is founded upon, and supports, the doctrine of his proper deity. The fact is, the word implies no more than that the person to whom it is applied has *authority* or *power;* and very frequently it is only a term of *respect*, given to a person without any reference to his superiority. It may be translated, *Master*, *Sir*, or *Lord*, according to the circumstances of the case.* Whence

* "It is obvious," says the Eclectic Reviewer, (April 1809) "that where this word is used only as a compellation of respect, it should be translated by *Sir*, or *Master;* and that the solemn title *Lord* should be employed only when the reference is to the Deity,

Jesus derived that authority which constituted him *Lord*, we learn from *Acts* ii. 36, and *Phil.* ii. 9—11 (see p. 113); and why he is called *Lord of all* (*Acts* x. 36), the connexion at once shows, —he is the spiritual sovereign of both Jews and Gentiles. He is *Lord of the dead and of the living* (*Rom.* xiv. 9), inasmuch as he has "power over the dead, to raise them to life again; and authority over the living, to command their obedience and devotedness to him." And he is the *Lord of glory* (1 *Cor.* ii. 8), since it is from his hands that the faithful disciple will receive the glory, honour, and immortality which God has promised to all who obey him.*

Acts iii. 15. 'And killed the PRINCE OF LIFE, whom God hath raised from the dead.'

The original word Αρχηγος, signifies a *captain* or *leader*. The reason why Peter calls Jesus the Leader to everlasting life, appears in the next

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or to cases where there is at least some recognition of the person and office of the Messiah. This rule is greatly violated in the Common Version; but in the Improved Version we have noticed very few instances in which it is transgressed, *viz.* *John* vi. 68. xi. 27. xiv. 5. 8. 22. In these we conceive *Lord* would be more suitable than *Master*."—I have no objection to the former rendering, in these and some other instances, but do not perceive that there is any material ground for preference: comp. xi. 28, where Martha speaks of Jesus as *Teacher*, διδασκαλος, immediately after her "solemn recognition" of him as the Messiah,—I have quoted the above remarks, because some unlearned persons have taken great offence at the rendering of Κυριος adopted in the Improved Version in reference to our Lord, particularly in *Acts* xxii. 8. 10, &c.

* In *v.* 7, the Apostle spoke of the mystery "which God predetermined before the world for our glory, εις δοξαν ἡμων," the expression in the next verse, 'the Lord of that glory,' τον κυριον της δοξης, appears to me to have a distinct reference to the preceding δοξαν.

clause; he was the first who was raised from the dead to die no more. In *Acts* v. 31, the same Apostle says, 'Him hath God exalted, as a Leader and Saviour, to give repentance unto Israel and forgiveness of sins.' In *Heb.* ii. 10, our Lord is styled the Leader of the sons of God to their salvation—the 'Captain of their salvation;' and in ch. xii. 2, he is called the Leader of faith,—"one that leads the way in faith, encouraging others to follow in that principle;" and the Finisher of faith,—one who set a complete example of trust and obedience. These are the only instances in which our Lord is called Αρχηγος, *Leader* or *Captain.*

Rev. i. 11. "I am ALPHA AND OMEGA, the FIRST and the LAST."

These words, occurring so soon after the same title in part had been given to the Lord God, have led many to believe that Jesus must be God. The fact is, these words are spurious, and are left out of the text by Griesbach.—In ch. i. 17. Jesus says 'I am the First and the Last: I am he that liveth and was dead,' or, as the words are more correctly rendered by Archdeacon Woodhouse, 'I am the First and the Last, and he who liveth; and I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever.' Jehovah being styled the First and the Last, in *Isa.* xliv. 6, it is inferred by many, that our Saviour must be God, because *he* also assumes this title. The connexion shows the fallacy of this reasoning; for the same person who says 'I am the First and the Last, and he who liveth,' also says 'I was

dead.' *Can* GOD *die?*—Indeed this class of inferences show the weakness of the cause which they are designed to support. In Isaiah, the Supreme Being says 'I am the First and the Last, and BESIDES ME there is NO GOD;' and the connexion shows that the words refer to HIS being from everlasting to everlasting: in the passage referred to, the connexion shows that the words can have no such meaning, for *Jesus* WAS DEAD.

In *Rev.* ii. 8. the title again occurs, and in a similar connexion; 'the First and the Last, who was dead and is alive:' and in ch. xxii. 13, after speaking of the great consummation of all things, our exalted Lord says 'I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last:' I have begun, and I shall end the Gospel dispensation. The three clauses are obviously of the same import, and serve to show the meaning of the last. Jesus was appointed by God to be the agent in executing the gracious purposes of HIS wisdom: 'all things,' as the Evangelist says, 'were done by him:' and as he, by the power of God, set in motion that mighty system which will hereafter include every rational inhabitant of this world, so he is appointed to assign the rewards and punishments of his kingdom, and finally to complete that glorious dispensation by which millions, and millions of millions, will have been led on to glory, honour, and immortality. Thus, (under HIM, who, in the highest sense, is Alpha and Omega, in the highest

sense our Saviour, to whose rich and free mercy we owe the gracious gift of the Gospel, and by whose almighty power its influences have been widely and will be most widely extended,) Jesus has the glory and happiness, purchased by his obedience unto death, of being the Cause and Finisher of salvation, the Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last.

Rev. xix. 16. 'And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh, a name written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.'

This is another title of the Supreme Being; but unless of itself it implies some degree of power which cannot be attributed to a human being, it affords no argument against the proper humanity of Christ. That it does not, the words of Daniel (ch. ii. 37) directly prove; 'Thou, O King, art KING OF KINGS, FOR the God of heaven hath GIVEN thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory.'—If the personage spoken of in the above passage be the Messiah, the connexion abundantly shows the reason of the appellation.

2 Cor. iv. 4. 'Christ who is the IMAGE OF GOD.' *Col.* i. 15. 'Who is the IMAGE OF THE INVISIBLE GOD.' *Heb.* i. 3, "Who being THE BRIGHTNESS OF HIS GLORY, and the EXPRESS IMAGE OF HIS PERSON, and upholding all things by the word of his power."

Why Jesus is called the *image of God*, is abundantly obvious: see p. 41. *note.* The epithets in the common translation of *Heb.* i. 3. may be thought more forcible; but they are not the correct rendering of the original. Απαυγασμα means *ray*, *beam*, or *effulgence;* ὑποστασις obviously denotes the essential attributes or moral perfections of the divine character. The true

rendering probably is, 'Who being the effulgence (or bright manifestation) of HIS glory, and the image of HIS perfections, and directing all things by the word of HIS power.* The Author of the Wisdom of Solomon, personifying the principle of Wisdom, says, ch. vii. 26, 'For she is a ray (απαυγασμα) of everlasting light, and an unspotted mirror of the energy of God, and an image (εικων) of His goodness;' and this language well explains what the Writer to the Hebrews says: by Jesus Christ, the glorious perfections of God were illustriously displayed, and HIS wisdom, goodness, and mercy, manifested to mankind.

1 *Cor.* i. 24. 'Christ, the POWER OF GOD, and the WISDOM OF GOD.'

This means, as the connexion shows (especially *v.* 18), that the Christian scheme of salvation manifests the power and wisdom of God.

Col. ii. 9. 'For in him DWELLETH ALL THE FULNESS OF THE GODHEAD BODILY.'

In ch. i. 19. (see p. 179), the Apostle says, 'For it pleased *the Father* that all fulness should dwell in him;' and it is hence obvious, that, whatever that fulness mean, it once did not dwell in him, and, that it was by the will of God that it dwelt in him at all. From *Eph.* i. 23, we learn that Jesus filled his *disciples* with all things; and from ch. iii. 19, that they also 'might be filled even to† the

* Griesbach has *αὐτου his own;* but every critic knows that the insertion of the aspirate depends almost solely upon the circumstances of the case.

† The preposition is εις, and the more common rendering of it is *to* or *into*. It may also be rendered *as to, even to,* and perhaps also

whole fulness of God.' No one, I presume, will assert, that 'the fulness of God,' and, 'the fulness of the Godhead' or Divinity, must or do mean different things: and if not, the whole force of the text in question rests on the word *bodily*. This word signifies *truly* or *really* (see *v.* 17): and I apprehend the Apostle meant, that the spiritual and heavenly blessings of the Gospel fully and truly dwelt in Jesus, and that he had the power of communicating them to others. 'Of his fulness,' says the Apostle John, 'we have all received.'

Phil. ii. 5—8. "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus: [6] who BEING IN THE FORM OF GOD, THOUGHT IT NOT ROBBERY TO BE EQUAL WITH GOD; [7] but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: [8] and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."—'Ος εν μορφῃ θεου ὑπαρχων, ουχ ἁρπαγμον ἡγησατο το ειναι ισα θεῳ, αλλ' ἑαυτον εκενωσε, μορφην δουλου λαβων, εν ὁμοιωματι ανθρωπων γενομενος· και

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with, as in the Public Version; but of this last, I have not discovered any clear instance in the writings of Paul. With the usual force of εις, the rendering would be, 'that ye may be filled into all the fulness of God; and Schleusner, employing that meaning of πληρωμα which is pointed out by *Eph.* i. 23, 'the church, which is his body, the fulness, (πληρωμα) of him who filleth all *his members* with all *things*,' explains the present passage, "that you may be received into the Christian church." To me this interpretation appears inadmissible, because the Epistle is addressed 'to the saints, and faithful in Christ Jesus,' and because παν *all* is in this case useless. However, if any choose this meaning of πληρωμα, let them, with Schleusner, employ it in the other passages of the Ephesians and Colossians. These Schleusner thus interprets: *Eph.* iv. 13, "to that perfect age, or, to the perfection, to which the Christian church ought to rise;" *Col.* i. 19, "it pleased God, that Christ should be King and Lord of the whole body of his followers;" and *Col.* ii. 9, "that by Christ, the whole church of God is comprehended, so that it may be as it were his body."

rendering probably is, 'Who being the effulgence (or bright manifestation) of HIS glory, and the image of HIS perfections, and directing all things by the word of HIS power.* The Author of the Wisdom of Solomon, personifying the principle of Wisdom, says, ch. vii. 26, 'For she is a ray (απαυγασμα) of everlasting light, and an unspotted mirror of the energy of God, and an image (εικων) of His goodness;' and this language well explains what the Writer to the Hebrews says: by Jesus Christ, the glorious perfections of God were illustriously displayed, and HIS wisdom, goodness, and mercy, manifested to mankind.

1 *Cor.* i. 24. 'Christ, the POWER OF GOD, and the WISDOM OF GOD.'

This means, as the connexion shows (especially *v.* 18), that the Christian scheme of salvation manifests the power and wisdom of God.

Col. ii. 9. 'For in him DWELLETH ALL THE FULNESS OF THE GODHEAD BODILY.'

In ch. i. 19. (see p. 179), the Apostle says, 'For it pleased *the Father* that all fulness should dwell in him;' and it is hence obvious, that, whatever that fulness mean, it once did not dwell in him, and, that it was by the will of God that it dwelt in him at all. From *Eph.* i. 23, we learn that Jesus filled his *disciples* with all things; and from ch. iii. 19, that they also 'might be filled even to† the

* Griesbach has *αὑτου his own;* but every critic knows that the insertion of the aspirate depends almost solely upon the circumstances of the case.

† The preposition is εις, and the more common rendering of it is *to* or *into*. It may also be rendered *as to, even to,* and perhaps also

whole fulness of God.' No one, I presume, will assert, that 'the fulness of God,' and, 'the fulness of the Godhead' or Divinity, must or do mean different things: and if not, the whole force of the text in question rests on the word *bodily*. This word signifies *truly* or *really* (see *v.* 17): and I apprehend the Apostle meant, that the spiritual and heavenly blessings of the Gospel fully and truly dwelt in Jesus, and that he had the power of communicating them to others· 'Of his fulness,' says the Apostle John, 'we have all received.'

Phil. ii. 5—8. "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus: [6] who BEING IN THE FORM OF GOD, THOUGHT IT NOT ROBBERY TO BE EQUAL WITH GOD; [7] but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: [8] and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."—Ὃς εν μορφῃ θεου ὑπαρχων, ουχ ἁρπαγμον ἡγησατο το ειναι ισα θεῳ, αλλ' ἑαυτον εκενωσε, μορφην δουλου λαβων, εν ὁμοιωματι ανθρωπων γενομενος· και

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σχηματι εὑρεθεις ὡς ανθρωπος, εταπεινωσεν ἑαυτον, γενομενος ὑπηκοος μεχρι θανατου, θανατου δε σταυρου.

The common rendering of this most interesting passage has, without doubt, greatly contributed to support the popular doctrine of the deity of Christ; but if we interpret the words of the Apostle agreeably to the phraseology of the Scriptures, they will be found to contain nothing inconsistent with the general tenor of the New Testament. The only essential difficulty, and this is merely critical, rests with the word ἁρπαγμον, which is generally translated *robbery*, but which most critics of the present day understand to signify *any object to be eagerly grasped at*, or *which has been obtained by force,—prey*, or *booty*.

It is unnecessary for my object in this work, to enter into a minute grammatical investigation of the force of ἁρπαγμος. It is not to be disputed that it is susceptible of two meanings; one passive, like ἁρπαγμα, denoting *plunder*, *booty*, *prey*, &c.; the other active, to denote the *act of seizing* or *plundering*.* The latter is most according with the original analogy of verbals in μος: but it is certain that the distinction between these, and the verbals in μα, was frequently neglected; each being used both actively and passively; so that no certain argument can be derived from the distinction. In the only instance in which ἁρπαγμος occurs in a classic author, (*viz.* Plu-

* There is the same ambiguity in some English words: *mixture*, *e.g.* denotes the *act* of mixing, and the COMPOUND *formed* by the mixture.

tarch's Treatise on Education,) it is used *actively*, denoting the *act of seizing:** but those early Greek Writers who referred to the text, and who must have known the power of their own native language, uniformly (I believe) make it denote *prey*. Still there is no reason, either in the actual use of the word, or in the analogy of its formation, which should prevent our translating it *plundering*, or, rather, *unjust assumption*, which best suits the subject, and sufficiently expresses the force of the original.

The greatest objection I perceive to the active sense, arises from the less usual (but not unauthorized †) force it requires for αλλα *(but)* at the beginning of the 7th verse, which must then be rendered *yet* or *nevertheless*.

If the passive sense of ἁρπαγμος is taken, there are still two interpretations of it: it may denote an object as *to be seized;* or, being already possessed, *to be used* as a prey or booty. I apprehend the distinction has not always been sufficiently made; and the neglect of it has sometimes led to error in the objections made against the interpretation. In the former case, ουχ ἁρπαγμον ἡγησατο may be rendered, *he did not regard the resemblance to God as a thing to be eagerly aimed at*, meaning, that he did not eagerly grasp at it: in the second case, *he did not regard it as a prey*—as absolutely

* See Wetstein in loco.

† See, for instance 1 *Cor.* iv. 15, 'Though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet (αλλα) not many fathers.' So also ch. viii. 6, 'Yet (αλλα) to us, &c. See *Schleusner*, No. 7.

his own, to be employed as his own, for his own honour, emolument, or gratification,—but as a *trust*. I think this last the true meaning; and it expresses best the disinterestedness and the pious humility of our Lord.

The common translation gives an impression inconsistent with the character of him who sought not his own glory, and who was the SENT and SERVANT of JEHOVAH, as well as HIS WELL-BELOVED SON. The ear must be long trained to unscriptural language, before it can endure it. When, independently of *any* doctrinal discussion, the mind has been impressed, by the simple thoughtful perusal of the Scriptures, with the representations so often found there, implying the unrivalled supremacy of Jehovah, it can scarcely avoid rejecting the expression "thought it not robbery to be equal with God," as derogatory to the character of him whose meat it was to do the will of the Father who sent him, and to finish his work. While it appears to exalt his *power*, it really degrades the glories of his moral character. It never can be, (might the unlearned Scripturalist justly say,) that the Apostle who declares (1 *Cor.* xv. 28) that, even at the highest elevation of dignity and authority which Christ Jesus shall attain, through the mighty power of his God and Father, he will still be subject to him, could mean to represent him as thinking it no "robbery to be equal with God." The SERVANT OF JEHOVAH *think it no robbery to be* EQUAL *with*

JEHOVAH!—that great and glorious Being who is the KING ETERNAL, IMMORTAL, AND INVISIBLE, THE ONLY WISE GOD, THE BLESSED AND ONLY POTENTATE, WHO ONLY HATH IMMORTALITY, THE ONLY GOD, OF WHOM, AND THROUGH WHOM, AND TO WHOM ARE ALL THINGS!

I do not wonder, however, when that early-impressed feeling of reverence for the Scriptures, which is most salutary in proportion as it is at once efficacious and discriminating, throws a borrowed lustre around expressions which would otherwise be at least *neglected* as inconsistent with the light of divine truth: nor when the simple truth itself sometimes receives a distorting tinge from their reflected glare. I have more wondered that while such expressions remain in connexion with what the heart and the understanding hold sacred, so many come to the conclusion, rapidly spreading among unlearned but intelligent Scripturalists, that the Father is the only true God, and that Christ Jesus (however great and exalted) is his servant and his creature, and *therefore* infinitely inferior in dignity and in power to HIM whose word he declared, whose glory he sought, and whose will he performed.

Nevertheless it appears to me difficult, when the understanding is actively exercised, to read the whole of the passage without perceiving the following facts. (1) That the qualities for which Christ is presented to our imitation, (*viz.* his *humility*, *disinterestedness*, and *pious obedience*,) are such as are inconsistent with the doctrine that

he is essentially and truly God. (2) That 'he submitted to death' proves that he was *mortal*, and consequently that he was not in any sense or way that Being 'who only hath immortality.' (3) That his *exaltation*—itself inconsistent with the idea that he was in any sense or way the Blessed and Only Potentate, unchangeable, and almighty,—was effected by God, and that it was HE who bestowed upon him his subsequent dignity and power. (4) That all the honour and authority which was conferred upon him, was to the glory of God even the Father.—Taking the passage throughout, it is, in my judgment, incapable of any consistent meaning on the principles of Trinitarianism: a Being truly and properly God, (and therefore unchangeable, immortal, self-existent, and independent,) could never have been obedient, could never have died, could never have been exalted. I am aware that some will reply, "All this refers to the human nature of Christ:" but I would entreat those who feel entangled by the strange, unmeaning, or else absurd doctrine, of two natures in Christ Jesus, to consider the simple obvious fact, that if he were at all or at any time truly God, he never could have been otherwise: that whatever else he might have been,—though, if *without the shadow of a change*, I know not how he could have been any thing else,—he must ever, at all times, (when *labouring*, *suffering*, *dying*, and *dead* in the tomb, equally as when on the throne of glory, creating all

worlds, and supporting all beings,) have been truly and properly God.*

On the whole, I know no passage respecting Christ himself, which is more directly opposed to the doctrine of his proper deity, than this which we are considering, including from the 5th to the 11th verse.

How far it is consistent with the simple doctrine of the Apostle, that the Lord and Saviour of the Christian, the 'one Mediator between God and Men,' is 'the MAN CHRIST JESUS,' I proceed to show: but whatever may be the result of the reader's inquiry on this point, the foregoing conclusions remain unaffected.

As to the expression ἴσα θεῷ, rendered "equal with God," there is no doctrinal difficulty. The learned and excellent Whitby has shown in his Commentary,† that the original phrase need not mean more than *to be as God:* ‡ I think it is of nearly the same import as *being in the form of God,* εν μορφῃ θεου ὑπαρχων.

Εν μορφῃ θεου exactly corresponds in expression

* In full consistence with this, and carrying the principle to its fair extent, the hymns prevalent among those of the Dissenters who so frequently charge the Unitarian with degrading *Christ,* contain such expressions as these, "The *great Jehovah* DIES:" "The *immortal God* for me hath DIED:" "The *mighty Maker* DIES," &c.

† This was in the days of his orthodoxy. His *Last Thoughts,* in which he most unequivocally retracted several of his unscriptural interpretations, should always, in justice to this noble-minded Berean, be printed with his Commentary. The tract was extremely scarce; but it has recently been reprinted by H. Clarke. Some extracts from the Preface will be found in the Author's *Examination of Archbishop Magee's Charges against Unitarianism,* &c. p. 326—328.

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to εν μορφη δουλου, *in the form of a servant;* * and it would, I think, be most correctly *in the form of* A *god.* 'Υπαρχων, *being*, is in opposition to λαβων, *taking.*† This Representative of Jehovah *actually was*, by reason of his exalted authority and high powers, possessed of the characteristics of *Elohim (a god):* for, to use the ideas of Dr. Waterland (see p. 149), he possessed the most extensive spiritual *dominion*, and *published commands from heaven;* or following the representations of Schleusner,‡ he *acted under the express authority* of God, and *executed the functions of God* on earth; or, according to the brief but comprehensive interpretation of our Lord himself, to him (in the most eminent degree) *the word of God came.*§

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* It might give a more correct idea of the force of the Apostle's words, as they respect the *humiliation* of Christ, if we rendered δουλου *slave* rather than *servant: bond-servant* perhaps conveys the true idea.

† Some have laid a singular stress on ὑπαρχων, as though it implied that Christ was, *by his original nature*, in the form of God. Did the Apostle mean to represent himself as by his original nature 'zealous towards God,' when he says (*Acts* xxii. 3) ζηλωτης ὑπαρχων του Θεου?

‡ Θεος § 4. "Metaphorice: *qui jussu, mandato, et auctoritate Dei agit et vicem Dei in his terris gerit.* Sic v.c. *magistratus et judices* sub nomine θεων veniunt, *Joh.* x. 34—35. coll. *Ps.* lxxxii. 6. *Exod.* xxii. 28. *Ps.* xcvii. 9. etiam *angeli et omnino principes.* 1 *Cor.* viii. 5. *Exod.* vii. 1."

§ It deserves consideration, in support of this mode of explaining θεος, in the phrase εν μορφη θεου, that it appears clear from the Acts, and is not opposed by the Epistle itself, that the first Philippian converts were in general from among the devout Gentiles, who had learnt the knowledge and worship of God from the Jewish Scriptures. They could not therefore be ignorant of the following expressions, 'See, I have made thee a *god* (θεον) to Pharaoh, and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet; 'God standeth in the congregation of the mighty (θεων), he judgeth among the *gods* (θεους);' and, 'I have said, Ye are *gods*, and all of you are children of the Most High,' θεοι εστε, και υιοι ὑψιστου παντες. *Exod.* vii. 1. *Ps.* lxxxii. 1, 6. Indeed this 82nd Psalm seems to me to afford decisive illustration of the Apostle's words; which will be further seen as we proceed.

If any are unable to admit the foregoing mode of interpreting θεου, (through the reasonable objection to it, that the Apostle does not appear to have employed this Hebrew idiom in any other place,) they may consider εν μορφη Θεου, *in the form of God*, as denoting that he possessed the *divine characteristics* of *authority* and *power;* that he had *divine authority* to require submissive allegiance from others, and *divine power* to change the course of nature at his will. Following this mode of interpretation, υπαρχων εν μορφη Θεου may be equivalently rendered *being possessed of divine characteristics.**

Μορφη signifies *form*, *external appearance*, *rank* or *condition*. It comprehends all that respects

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* The term *characteristics* I here adopt from Dr. Pye Smith, (*Scrip. Test.* Vol. II. p. 395,) whose remarks on this passage I have repeatedly considered with the attention and respect his critical investigations deserve, and have weighed, with all the accuracy and impartiality in my power. It would be inconsistent with the objects of this volume, to enter into a critical examination of those from which I dissent; nor indeed would it answer any useful purpose. If the *Unitarian's* induction of the Scripture Testimony respecting the Messiah is correct, Dr. Pye Smith's general interpretation of this passage *cannot* be true: and, at any rate, if a reasonable interpretation can be given of it, consistent with the phraseology and analogy of Scripture, his, and every other Anti-Unitarian interpretation is *unnecessary;* and then (as I fully believe) the passage of itself can prove nothing which the Unitarian rejects.

If θεον be rendered God, μορφη clearly need not be strained to denote the *essential characteristics* of Jehovah: for μορφη δουλου does not denote that Christ took upon him the *essential characteristics* of a slave. He was among the disciples as *one who serveth;* but he was not in the power of any human being, as a slave is of his master: nor did he take the disposition and moral character of a slave; nor any other characteristic, except that of external condition, and, in particular, the readiness to perform even servile offices for those whom he might have commanded as their Lord. If ever μορφη denote the *essential characteristics*, it is merely by *inference* from the *external form*.

external appearance in *condition, office*, and *service.*—*Character*, in the sense in which the word is used when we say "the *character* of an ambassador, or of a slave," seems to me most exactly to convey the Apostle's meaning in using μορφη; and I know no other objection to it, than that it might be understood to denote *personal qualities*, which in neither clause are denoted by it. *Station* avoids this ambiguity; and, in this connexion, it is nearer to the force of μορφη than *form*, which refers too exclusively to *visible appearance* to suit the first clause, μορφη θεου, though it sufficiently suits the latter, μορφη δουλου. If we must (as is certainly desirable) employ the same English word for both, *character* or *station* I consider as most corresponding with the original. Christ Jesus was in the character or station of a *god*, because, by the appointment of Jehovah, he was possessed of divine authority, and divine powers. This is expressed, with full equivalence to the original, (while it avoids the Hebrew use of the appellation *god*, which must be perplexing to the mere English reader,) if we render εν μορφῃ θεου ὑπαρχων, *being possessed of a divine character*, (or, as before, *of divine characteristics;*) in which rendering both interpretations of θεου agree.

If we take the lower sense of θεος in the first clause, and it should in consequence be deemed necessary to take it also in the second, then το ειναι ισα θεῳ may be closely rendered, *the being on the footing of a god.* Christ did not regard this

divine rank and character as absolutely his own, to be employed for personal ostentation or dignity, or to accomplish any of the purposes of interest or power, or to obtain any worldly gratification; he employed his divine authority and powers as a *trust* and not as a *prey*. Even Christ pleased not himself; but he always did what pleased his heavenly Father, his Sovereign, and his God. It makes, however, no difference in *sense*, if we render *το ειναι ισα θεῳ*, *the being like* GOD. He was *god* (in the Hebrew sense) as "resembling God" in authority and power, (see p. 148;) and therefore to be on the footing of a *god*, and to resemble God, are exactly equivalent. His resemblance to God consisted in his divine authority and divine powers; and by the possession of these he was a *god*, he was *Elohim*.

Ἑαυτον εκενωσε, *he made himself of no reputation*, more literally signifies, *he emptied* or *divested himself*. Of what? Certainly, had he been truly God, self-existent, unchangeable, and immortal, all-wise, all-powerful, and infinitely good, he could not have divested himself of these, the *essential* characteristics of Deity. Nor could he, on the other hand, have divested himself of the divine authority and powers which the Father gave him. But he divested himself of that external dignity and splendour naturally belonging to his high powers and exalted dominion.

He made himself of no account, taking the character of a bond-servant, and *being in the likeness of men*, *εν ὁμοιωματι ανθρωπων γενομενος*. This

last clause closely corresponds with the next: Και σχηματι ευρεθεις ως ανθρωπος, *And being found in condition as a man.* This the words of the Psalmist (lxxxii. 6) seem to me well to illustrate, 'I said, Ye are gods, and all of you children of the Most High; but ye shall die as men, ως ανθρωποι, (that is, surely, as men of ordinary rank,) and fall like one of the princes.'* Ανθρωπος, when used by way of contrast with a state of high rank or power, peculiarly denotes a person of ordinary rank and ordinary powers. In this way it is used in the Septuagint in reference to Samson: *Judges* xvi. 7. (and also in *v.* 11 and 13.) 'I shall be weak and be as one of men,' ως εις των ανθρωπων, where our translators have properly rendered the original, *as another man.* The contrast is still more striking in *Is.* ii. 9, (and also in ch. v. 15. xxxi. 8.) where ανθρωπος, אדם, denotes a *mean man*, and ανηρ, איש, *a man of elevated rank:* 'and the mean man (ανθρωπος) bowed down, and the great man humbled himself,' εταπεινωθη ανηρ. With such usage of the word in the Septuagint, and a corresponding employment of it in the New Testament,† I cannot hesitate in regarding ανθρωπος as here denoting a man of ordinary rank and powers, an ordinary man, poor, and ignoble.

The force of σχημα "*fashion,*" in this connexion,

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* Rosenmuller and other critics render this last clause, 'and equally with them shall ye fall, O Princes.' On the first clause of *v.* 7. Rosenmuller says, "Vocabulo אדם h.l. *plebeius* quivis designatur; ut *Ps.* xlix. 2. lxii. 9. *Is.* ii. 9."

† See Schleusner, Ανηρ, §. 6, and Ανθρωπος, §. 7 and 10.

is obvious enough. It denotes external *state* or *condition.** Our Lord was in the condition of a man of ordinary powers and humble station. Εὑρεθεὶς "*being found*" means no more than *being.*† Εταπεινωσεν ἑαυτον "he humbled himself," forcibly expresses the abject abasement and suffering to which he submitted.

I now proceed to give, in a connected form, what appears to me the full import of this passage; only requesting the reader to bear in mind the general statements which have already been made. (See p. 202.)

[5] *For that disposition should be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus;* [6] *who, being in a divine character* (or *station*), invested with the most dignified commission, appointed to be the revealer of Jehovah's will, and the ambassador of HIS love and mercy, clothed by HIM with divine authority, and endowed with divine powers, *did not regard this resemblance to God as a prey*, did not consider his high prerogatives and unlimited powers as his own, to be employed to promote his own personal advantage, splendour, or dominion, to gratify selfish pride or ambition: [7] *but* on the contrary *made himself of no account, taking the character* (or *station*) *of a bond-servant*, performing servile offices for those who owned him

* "Generatim *omnem habitum et statum alicujus rei externum* significat; specialim vero dicitur de habitu, cultu, gestu, incessu, forma ac conditione externa corporis humani."—Schleusner in σχημα.

† Εὑρισκεσθαι sæpe poni pro γινεσθαι—notum est."—Rosenmuller. "Εὑρισκομαι *sum, existo*, i. q. ειμι."—Schleusner, §. 11.

as their Lord, himself ministering unto them though about to possess an everlasting dominion, and a name above every name, *and* (though to the eye of faith, and sometimes even to the bodily eye, surrounded with glory ineffable) *being in the likeness of ordinary men*, to all outward appearance in no respect different from other children of men, 'a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.' [8] *And being in external condition as a man* of ordinary rank and power,—remaining in the state of lowly poverty, though the wealth of the world was at his command, and though those who rejected him as a spiritual sovereign would gladly have united to raise him to an earthly throne,—*he submitted to the most abject humiliation, being obedient unto death*, even *the* excruciating and ignominous *death of the cross.* [9] *Wherefore also*, on account of his humility, and disinterested love, and pious obedience, *God hath exceedingly exalted him*, &c.*

On this very interesting passage I have little more to observe, than that there is not one expression which in any way necessarily implies that Jesus possessed a superior *nature;* and that, taken in its connexion, it is quite inconsistent with the proper deity of Christ, still more with

* If ἁρπαγμος be regarded as denoting *unjust assumption*, the first part of the passage may be paraphrased thus: Who being the representative of the Most High, and invested by HIM with the most dignified authority and power, did not regard it as an unjust assumption of dignity and authority, to act, on all suitable occasions, as the representative of God; nevertheless, instead of aiming at the external splendour and honours which as the Messiah he might have claimed, he voluntarily led a life of poverty and humiliation, &c.

the doctrine of his equality with his GOD and Father. To me it appears, that unless we interpret Jewish phraseology by our own modes of speaking and thinking, and especially by preformed opinions as to the person of Christ, it speaks no other language than what the Apostle elsewhere employs, that there is 'one Mediator between God and men, the MAN Christ Jesus.'

It brings forcibly into view, however, the scriptural grounds of love and reverence to Christ. That he manifested such heart-inspiring excellencies of character, such holiness, such humility, such disinterestedness and tenderness, such piety, resignation, and obedience,—that, to promote the best interests of mankind, to redeem us from all iniquity, and to seal the covenant of mercy and everlasting life, he voluntarily led a life of poverty, subjected himself to humiliation, reproach, and suffering, and at last submitted to death, in circumstances of peculiar agony and shame,—are claims upon our gratitude, our veneration, and our love. That he was appointed by his God and Father to a commission of immense and everlasting importance to mankind, so truly dignified and exalted, beyond whatever has been, or ever will be, possessed by any other of the children of men,—that he was honoured with such distinguished marks of the divine approbation,—that after his ascension he was made our spiritual Sovereign, and Lord of the dead and the living, —that by him God created the world anew to

true holiness and blessedness,—and that a period will come when by him GOD will raise the dead and judge the world in righteousness,—are surely most powerful motives to our trust, our reverence, our submissive obedience. I know no better foundation for our faith and hope than what God wrought in and by him, declared by him, gave him authority to perform, and power to execute. See 1 *Pet.* i. 21.

John xiv. 9, 10. 'He that hath seen me hath seen the Father, and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father and the Father in me?'

The whole context plainly proves that these expressions are to be understood metaphorically; and indeed, the first clause proves either that Jesus was the Father himself, or nothing as to his *nature*. It appears obviously to mean the same with *v.* 7. (See also 1 *John* iv. 7, and p. 22, *note.)* And if any really think that the latter clause necessarily, or at all, implies a superior nature in Jesus, let him carefully consider ch. xvii. 21, and especially 1 *John* iii. 24. iv. 12, 13, 14, 16.—If Christians, instead of interpreting Scripture by Creeds and Articles, would make it its own interpreter, it would not be very long before the primitive faith would be universally revived; and this would be regarded (as the Apostle John regarded it,) as the only fundamental principle of christian belief—that Jesus is the Son of God. 'Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God (says this venerable Apostle), God dwelleth in him and he in God;' 'Whoso-

ever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God;' 'Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?' What christian community can dare to challenge apostolical authority? and yet how few churches are there but would refuse admission within their pale, unless the candidate avowed more than this apostolical confession!

John xxi. 17. 'Lord, thou knowest all things.'

This is one of the few passages which are adduced to prove the OMNISCIENCE of Jesus: if it proves so much with respect to Jesus, why should it not respecting his disciples in the apostolical age? 'Ye (says the Apostle John, 1 *Ep.* ii. 20,) have an unction from the holy one, and know all things.' It appears, however, from several passages in the Gospels, that Jesus occasionally manifested a supernatural acquaintance with the thoughts of others: it seems to have been requisite for the purposes of his mission; and who will say that God could not have communicated such knowledge when necessary, or even a permanent power of knowing the thoughts? It is obvious from *Acts* ii. 22. x. 38, &c. that Peter, when he used the above declaration, could have meant nothing relative to the proper deity of his Lord; and it is also obvious, that when Jesus manifested supernatural knowledge, it did not produce in the minds of his disciples the inference which is now sometimes drawn from it: see *John* i. 45—51.—In *Rev.* ii. 23, our Lord is represented as saying 'and all the churches shall

know that I am he who searcheth the reins and the hearts;' and at first sight the expression seems decidedly to favour the common system; but on referring to the first verse of the book, ('the revelation of Jesus Christ, which God GAVE him, to show to his servants things which must come to pass,') we see at once that *his knowledge was* LIMITED, and that *he* DERIVED *it*, whatever was its extent and object, *from* GOD.*—These two passages are the strongest which occur in favour of the Omniscence of Jesus; and if these are totally inadequate to prove that he possessed knowledge which God could not have imparted to one who was a man in the common sense of the term, no other will be found to do more.†

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* "Even the prophets occasionally knew the secret thoughts and transactions of men at a distance. Ahijah knew the thoughts of Jeroboam's wife, 1 *Kings* xiv. 5, 6. Elisha knew the conduct of Gehazi at a distance from him, and the secret counsels of the Assyrian king, 2 *Kings* v. 25, 26. vi. 12. Daniel knew the thoughts of the king of Babylon upon his bed, *Dan.* ix. 29. And Peter knew the secret transactions of Ananias, *Acts* v. 4." James's Short View of the Tenets of Tritheists, &c. App. p. 97.

† *Heb.* iv. 12, 13. has by some been referred to Jesus, and of course regarded as a proof of his omniscience. It may be so referred; but the 14th verse, and indeed the connexion in general, are unfavourable to such a reference. At any rate it is in no way necessary. If Griesbach's punctuation of v. 13. be adopted, (*viz.* a comma after the first *αυτου*, so as to make it an antecedent of *ὀν*,) the construction of the passage becomes very simple; 'And there is not a creature which is not manifest before Him with whom we have to do, but all things are naked and opened to His sight.'—To every argument for the omniscience of Jesus, the Unitarian may content himself with appealing to our Lord's own words in *Mark* xiii. 32. (See p. 107.)

On this subject I wish to call the reader's attention to a most able Discourse by the Rev. Joseph Hutton, of Leeds, entitled *Omniscience the Attribute of the* FATHER ONLY. 1819. In reply to the main argument of the discourse, I know not what can be said.

Matt. ix. 6. 'That ye may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth TO FORGIVE SINS;' rather, 'authority (εξουσιαν) to forgive sins.'

That he had such authority he proved: the point is, could God communicate it to a man? Without determining the precise import of ch. xvi. 19, I think it clear that the authority which our Lord gave to Peter was as extensive as any which we have any record of himself exercising. Two things also deserve to be noticed. (1) Our Lord speaks of himself as Son of *Man* when he says he has this authority; (2) He does not intimate that he then had authority to remit the future punishment of sin, but only to remove its present consequences—'*on earth* to forgive sins.' This last observation must be borne in mind, in order to understand the phraseology in *v.* 5; and it is somewhat remarkable, that when he speaks of the forgiveness of sins, in cases which refer to the guilt and future punishment of sin (see *Luke* vii. 47), he merely declares the fact, 'Thy sins are forgiven thee.'

Matt. xviii. 20. 'For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.' *Matt.* xxviii. 20. "Lo I am with you always, even to the end of the world."

These passages are adduced to prove the OMNIPRESENCE of Jesus; and, except *Eph.* i. 23. (which has nothing to do with the subject, see p. 225,) are all the passages on which this stupendous doctrine can be rested. If any one think this epithet too strong, let them recollect that this doctrine supposes that he who is present at the same instant, in every part of the unbounded

universe, descended from a local residence, limited himself to the narrow confines of a narrow region on this earth, (which is itself a mere speck in comparison with the distance between it and the nearest fixed star,) and for thirty years dwelt in a human body. As we do not know the nature of the divine presence, it might be presumption to say that this is impossible; but before the belief in such a doctrine is made essential to salvation, let the doctrine itself be proved. If it were a fact, (which it must be if the Trinitarian system were true,) is it not astonishing that no notice is taken of it, except by Matthew? and this merely by his recording two expressions of our Lord, which only prove, at most, that he had the power of being, in a supernatural manner, personally present with his Apostles after he left this earth? In the first of these passages, *Matt.* xviii. 20, our Lord says to his Apostles, (and the preceding verses show that the promise was limited to them,) 'wherever two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.' "He was in the midst of them, either by his personal presence, agreeably to his promise, *Matt.* xxviii. 20, or, by his spiritual presence, similar to the gift occasionally conferred upon his Apostles, of knowing things which passed in places where they were not actually present, 1 *Cor.* v. 3, 4, or, lastly, by that authority which he had delegated, and by the powers which he had communicated to them to perform miracles in his name. See Pearce and

Newcome."* I do not venture to say that Jesus is not now spiritually present wherever his disciples assemble together as such: his powers, we know, were greatly extended when he entered into his glory, and they may have been thus far extended; but I do not perceive any declaration of the fact in the Scriptures.

The second passage, *Matt.* xxviii. 20. is generally considered as referring to personal presence, 'And, lo, I am with you always, to the end of the age,' του αιωνος, (see p. 181.) I agree in this opinion; but it appears also evident, that it refers to *all* the aid which Jesus was empowered to communicate to his disciples, during the apostolical age: for μετα, *with*, denotes *aid* as well as *presence*, (see Schleusner;) and it would have been equally proper, if Jesus had never been, as we know he sometimes was, personally present with his disciples. The *end of the age* denotes, probably, the end of the Jewish dispensation, the annihilation of its civil and ecclesiastical peculiarities, by the final destruction of the city and temple of Jerusalem. We have no reason to believe that more than one of those to whom the promise was made (*v.* 16.) survived that event; and further, we have no adequate reason to believe that any fresh communications were made of miraculous powers, or that Jesus appeared personally to his disciples, after that period.

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* See the Note in the Improved Version.

John i. 1. "IN THE BEGINNING (εν αρχη) was the Word."—1 *John* i. 2. 'That ETERNAL LIFE which was with the Father.'—*Rev.* i. 11. "I am ALPHA and OMEGA, the FIRST and the LAST."—*Heb.* i. 8. "Thy throne, O God, is FOR EVER AND EVER."—*Heb.* vii. 3. Melchisedec 'having NEITHER BEGINNING OF DAYS NOR END OF LIFE; but, made like unto the Son of God,' &c.

These passages have been adduced to prove that ETERNITY is ascribed to Jesus in the New Testament, and that therefore he is truly God. As every disciple of Jesus has the hope set before him of an incorruptible and unfading inheritance, to prove that Jesus possessed this essential attribute of deity, it must be shown that he was *from* everlasting.* Now, *in the beginning*, from the very terms, can never denote that which has no beginning; but the fact is, the εν αρχη of John (though it is not improbable that it might be derived from the first words of Moses,) signifies the *beginning* of our Lord's ministry: (see p. 61.)—Some may infer that Jesus was possessed of the divine attribute of eternity, from his being spoken of as the *Life*, and the *Everlasting Life*; but those who consider the mode of expression in *John* x. 7. 11. xi. 25. xv. 1. can surely feel no difficulty in allowing that it is merely inference, without any solid ground of proof. The other passages which may be thought to favour the doctrine of our Lord's eternity have been already considered in p. 157 and 193. In *Heb.* vii. 3. one other expression occurs, which by

* In *Rev.* xxii. 5. it is said that the servants of God 'shall reign for ever and ever.'

some has been forced to give the necessary evidence; but it cannot be requisite to say more respecting it, than that if it prove the eternity of Jesus, it proves also the eternity of Melchisedec.

To all these remote inferences may be opposed the simple and indisputable fact, that CHRIST DIED. Jesus himself says, without making any reserve as to his divine nature, (if indeed one can rationally speak of a *nature* dying,) I WAS DEAD.

Heb. i. 12, (see p. 181.) *Heb.* xiii. 8. 'Jesus Christ, THE SAME YESTERDAY, TO-DAY, and FOR EVER.'

These are adduced to prove the IMMUTABILITY of Christ. The former was not addressed to Jesus, but to God; the latter may prove the unchangeableness of Jesus (if it do not rather refer to his doctrine, see *v.* 9); but the point is, does it prove a degree of unchangeableness to which a human being cannot attain? If it be referred to the outward frame, the Christian also will become unchangeable, (see *Phil.* iii. 21); if it be referred to mind and disposition, is such unchangeableness, in any way, a necessary proof of deity?

With the passages in view which are cited in p. 106—109, I cannot understand how any one can imagine that OMNIPOTENCE is ascribed to Jesus. The true reading of *Rev.* i. 8, (see p. 100,) shows the opinion to be groundless, that the epithet *Almighty* is there applied by Jesus to himself. Other passages which speak of his great authority and powers, expressly represent them

as *given* to him; and the point is, whether these powers were such as could not be communicated to one who as to nature was man only? Without referring here to his state of exaltation, it is sufficient to observe, that the miracles which he performed when on earth, are no proof whatever that he possessed a naturally inherent power of controlling the usual laws of nature,—that he himself ascribes them to God,—and that he expressly says, (*John* xiv. 12.) 'He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and GREATER works than these shall he do, because I go unto my Father.' That Jesus was the medium by which these powers were communicated to the Apostle, is in several places said or intimated; but if they could be communicated to *men*, that is all which is requisite for my purpose.

John ii. 19. 'JESUS answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I WILL RAISE IT UP.'—*John* x. 17, 18. "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life that I might take it again, ἵνα πάλιν λάβω αὐτήν. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I HAVE POWER TO TAKE IT AGAIN, καὶ ἐξουσίαν ἔχω πάλιν λαβεῖν αὐτήν. This commandment have I received of my Father."

These passages are adduced, (and I believe no others can be adduced,) to prove that JESUS CHRIST RAISED HIMSELF FROM THE DEAD. Before the Reader peruses the following remarks, I request his attention to those in p. 113. The clear general tenor of Scripture Doctrine is, that *Jesus Christ was raised from the dead by the*

mighty power of God. 'God raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory, that your faith and hope might be in God.' 1 *Pet.* i. 21.*

As to *John* x. 17, 18. the word rendered *take* might, with equal justice, have been rendered *receive*, as it is at the end of the 18th verse. The import of the last part of the 18th verse may be thus correctly represented: 'I have authority to lay it down; and I have the privilege to receive it again,' or to resume it.† 'This commission' or promise‡ 'I have received from my Father.'

If the words of our Lord to the Jews, in *John* ii. 19. were the only passage in which the immediate agent in the resurrection of Christ is spoken of, it might with some reason be inferred, that, in some incomprehensible manner, our Lord, (though still by power DERIVED from HIM to whom he referred all his power,) raised himself from the dead. But the New Testament so repeatedly, distinctly, and authoritatively declared, that 'God raised up Jesus,' that the simplest principles of interpretation lead us to

* Those who wish to know the Scripture Doctrine on the subject, may consult **Acts* iv. 10. **x.* 38—41. **xiii.* 30, 37. *Rom.* iv. 24, 25. vi. 4. viii. 11. **x.* 9. 1 *Cor.* xv. 15. *Gal.* i. 1. **Eph.* i. 16—20. *Col.* ii. 12. 1 *Thess.* i. 9, 10. *Heb.* xiii. 20. 1 *Pet.* i. 3, 20, 21, &c.; especially those to which an asterisk is prefixed. Throughout 1 *Cor.* xv. the passive verb, εγηγεται *(has been raised)* &c, is used in reference to the resurrection of Christ; and I know no reason why it should not be rendered passively.

† On this passage, and for a vindication of the different renderings of εξουσια, I beg to refer the Reader to *Appendix* B. in my *Reply to Archbishop Magee.*

‡ So Schleusner §. 5. "Promissio divina. *John* x. 18. ταυτην την εντολην ελαβον παρα του πατρος μου hoc præmium virtutis meæ mihi est a Deo promissum, צוה sæpe apud Hebræos *promittere* notat, v. c. *Ps.* xliv. 4. cxxxiii. 3.

seek for a different solution; and it is easily found by attending to the peculiarities of prophetic language. Prebendary Lowth, in his Commentary, states it as a general principle, "*That the Prophets are said* TO DO *things, when they* DECLARE GOD'S PURPOSE OF DOING THEM."* In exact accordance with the phraseology of prophecy, as well as with the express assertion of the Apostles, we may understand our Lord, (speaking, as he obviously did, with the obscurity of prophecy, yet in the common prophetic style,) as DECLARING GOD'S PURPOSE *to raise him up*. After the prophecy had been explained by the event, the Apostles, one and all, declared that 'God raised up Jesus.' I therefore rest, with the fullest conviction, in the great truth, that it was GOD, *even the* FATHER, *who raised up the Lord Jesus Christ from the dead.*

THE STATE OF HIGH DIGNITY AND POWER TO WHICH JESUS HAS BEEN EXALTED for his obedience unto death, is regarded by many as a proof of his proper deity; to me it appears to be a direct argument against it. That Jesus possessed, before he came forth from God, dignity and power superior to what the Scriptures state to have been bestowed upon him as a reward for

* Kuinoel, on *Luke* iv. 18. gives the same principle; "*Ut dimitterem calamitosos*, h. e. ut annuntiarem calamitosis liberationem. Nam quæ Prophetæ tantum annuntiant, ea sæpe ipsi facere dicuntur:—vid. hanc in rem, *Jer.* i. 10. *Hos.* vi. 5. *Mich.* ii. 12." —Lowth refers to *Jer.* i. 10. *Is.* vi. 10. *Ez.* xliii. 3. In the last instance the Prophet speaks of having been sent '*to destroy the city*,' *i.e.* to prophesy the destruction of it.

his having fully executed the work assigned him, is a contradiction in terms; inferior honour and authority cannot have been the reward for the voluntary relinquishing of greater. And if his previous dignity and power were greatly inferior to what he possessed after his exaltation, which the plain and obvious meaning of Scripture directly shows, two things necessarily follow;—he did not possess them by any *original constitution of his nature;* and, he was not, *before* his exaltation, superior to 'angels, principalities, and powers.'

All which directly concerns my argument is to show that, whatever be the precise meaning of the declarations of the Apostle Paul, &c. respecting the exaltation of Jesus, they afford no proof that Jesus was, as to nature, more than man.

I. In several passages Jesus is represented as being *seated at the right hand of God;* see *Mark* xvi. 19. *Col.* iii. 1. &c.; and in *Heb.* i. 3, it is said that he sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.—On these and similar expressions it may be observed, (1) It is expressly said, *Eph.* i. 20, that GOD set him at HIS OWN right hand. (2) The word *right hand* shows that we must understand these expressions figuratively. (3) They are obviously derived from the eastern custom,—for a chief minister, or associate in the government, to sit on the right hand of the sovereign. (4) In the gospel dispensation, Jesus was exalted to be above all except HIM who gave

him his authority: and the expressions referred to denote this, that he was head over all things to his church; and they imply no more than this.—A similar expression (referring however to dignity and happiness rather than to power) occurs in *Rev.* iii. 21.

II. In *Eph.* i. 20--23, the Apostle, describing the exaltation of Jesus, says that GOD 'set him at HIS OWN right hand,' gave him the highest authority and dignity, 'in heavenly *things*,' in that kingdom which ruleth in the hearts of men,* 'far above all principality and power and might and dominion,' above all kinds and degrees of power,† 'and every name that is named,' above all dignity which is borne by any, 'not only in this age, but in that also which is to come.'‡

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* Εν τοις επουρανιοις occurs five times in this Epistle. It is rendered in the Public Version 'heavenly *places*.' To the phrase itself I have no objection even in the common acceptation of the term. Various passages in the Scriptures lead to the conclusion, that there is some place, the blessed abode of superior intelligences, where God, in a peculiar manner, manifests his perfections and displays his glory: there, in the language of Scripture, is the *throne of God;* and there, we are led to infer, is the present residence of our Saviour. But I do not think the rendering a sufficiently authorized one: 'heavenly *things*' is the most simple meaning of the original; and as the other rendering is in no place necessary, and in some is unsuitable, I prefer uniformly rendering it thus. In the present connexion it affords a peculiarly appropriate meaning. (3d Ed.)

† The Greek is ὑπερανω πασης αρχης και εξουσιας και δυναμεως και κυριοτητος. The words are nearly the same as those in *Col.* i. 16; (see p. 178, *note.*) I understand the Apostle here to mean, all power and authority which might oppose his sway, and all which had been or was to be employed to aid the glorious purposes of his work and exaltation. (3d Ed.)

‡ Ου μονον εν τω αιωνι τουτω, αλλα και εν τω μελλοντι. If by αιων (*age*) the Apostle means *dispensation*, he represents the authority of Christ as (under God) supreme in spiritual things, not only during that period which preceded the final annihilation of the Jewish state and dispensation, but also in the period following it, which we

The next verse shows that the authority to which Jesus was exalted was simply of a spiritual nature: 'And he hath put all things under his feet, and appointed him head over all things TO THE CHURCH, which is his body, the fulness of him who filleth all *his members* with all things,' all spiritual blessings.—I am totally unable to perceive why one who as to nature was a man only, could not be exalted to this high dignity and authority, by the working of that mighty power of God (*v.* 19,) by which HE also raised Jesus from the dead.

III. *Phil.* ii. 9—11. 'Wherefore (see p. 210) God also hath highly exalted him, and bestowed upon him a name which is above every name,' authority superior to all other; 'that in the name of Jesus,' owning his authority, 'every knee should bow, of *beings* heavenly, earthly, and under the earth,* and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,—to the glory of God the Father.'—This passage is, in its general import, abundantly plain. The exaltation of Jesus consists in the extension and final universal prevalence of his spiritual authority.

have every reason to believe is designed to last till all the purposes of God respecting this world are accomplished. There is a little variation in import if he meant *state of being:* this would denote that the supremacy of Christ is to continue, not only in the present life, but also in that state of existence which will succeed it. I have no objection to either meaning. (3d Ed.)

* As Jesus is declared to have been made *Lord of the dead and the living,* and the phrase '*things in heaven and things on earth,*' is elsewhere used to denote *Jews* and *Gentiles,* (see p. 174, *note*), I apprehend that the Apostle meant to comprehend the consummation of the Gospel dispensation, as well as the present periods of it, and to intimate that all mankind, Jews and Gentiles, the living and the dead, should own the authority of Jesus.

IV. 1 *Pet.* iii. 22. 'Who is gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God,' possessed of the highest dignity in the gospel kingdom; 'angels and authorities and powers,' all heavenly and earthly power which respected the propagation of the Gospel, 'having been made subject to him.'*

V. *Matt.* xxviii. 18—20. Our Lord himself, when giving his Apostles their commission to preach the Gospel to *all* nations, says 'All power' all authority (εξουσια) 'has been given me in heaven and earth.' The connexion determines the extent, though not the precise nature of that authority; it was authority to rule in the hearts of *all* men, whatever their religious and civil distinctions. If, as appears to me very probable (see p. 174), our Saviour here employs the word *heaven* to denote the *Jewish nation*, and of course *earth* to denote the *Gentile world*, the assertion refers to the union in the gospel dispensation, of both Jews and Gentiles, according to his prediction in *John* x. 16: if it is to be taken more literally, it probably refers to those miraculous powers which he was authorized to send from heaven in order to extend and hasten the spread of his Gospel, and to the spiritual sovereignty which, by the glorious influences of the Gospel, he was to exercise among all.—Whatever be the precise meaning of the expression, which, probably, we have not facts enough to enable us to

* Αγγελος (*angel* or *messenger*) is applicable to any agent, animate or inanimate, which is employed by God to execute his purposes.

determine, it appears to me clear, from the connexion, that it refers to the *universality* of his *spiritual authority*, and not to the *degree* or *nature* of the *power* by which it was to be exercised.

VI. In *Rev.* i. 18. our Lord says to his favoured disciple, 'I live for ever and ever, and I have the keys of death and the grave,' I have authority to call the dead from the grave, and to give unto my sheep eternal life.

Respecting the NATURE OF THE DIGNITY AND AUTHORITY which were given to Jesus in consequence of his faithful and complete execution of the work assigned to him, we must of course be contented with the information which we may derive from the Scriptures.

(1) It is perfectly clear that the sovereignty of Christ is of a *spiritual* nature; and that he rules in the *hearts* of men by means of those precepts and principles which are contained in his Gospel.—Suppose that, after his ascension, it had pleased God to bestow upon him the rich rewards of his favour, in holy and happy intercourse with the blessed spirits which surround the throne, and in peculiar manifestations of his approbation and love, but without assigning to him any further agency in promoting the spiritual welfare of mankind,—still might our Saviour, with the utmost propriety, have been styled our Lord and King: the laws and rules of his kingdom must have been our guides and principles of action: and we must have been his obedient subjects, in order to obtain the

rewards and shun the punishments which the Gospel discloses to us.—Independently of any immediate share he may have in the present regulation of his church, his authority is there complete. To that, and that alone, should we bow in matters of religion. What he teaches, we have nothing to do but to believe. Where he commands, we have nothing to do but to obey. Where his precepts cannot be applied to particular cases, there the spirit of them must be our guide. All things must be done by the Christian, *in the name of the* LORD JESUS CHRIST, to the *glory of* GOD *even the* FATHER.

(2) He was authorized by God to communicate the holy spirit, during the apostolical age, to his Apostles, if not to his disciples at large. This I infer from *John* xiv. 13. xv. 26. xvi. 7. *Acts* ii. 33. In this last passage, Peter declares the authority by which Jesus communicated the spirit; and in the course of his speech to the Jews, delivered in consequence of the Apostles' having received the spirit, he speaks of Jesus as a MAN, and does not, though he speaks of his exaltation, give the slightest intimation that he was, as to nature, more than man. The speech is highly remarkable in every point of view; and I think may be considered as a proof, that the communication of the holy spirit gave them no new information as to the *nature* of Jesus.

(3) On several occasions he manifested himself to his Apostles, by direct spiritual communications, and sometimes by personally appearing to

them. The Apostle Paul seems to have received not only his commission, but all requisite instruction respecting the exercise of it, directly from his glorified Lord. See *Gal.* i. 1. 12. 1 *Cor.* xi. 23, &c. The favour shown to one, would scarcely be withheld from the other Apostles: he had promised to be with them continually till the end of the age (p. 217); and he declared to them that wherever two or three of them (the Apostles) were met together in his name, there should he be in the midst of them.*

(4) By means of the miraculous communications made to his disciples, the glorious doctrines of the Gospel were most rapidly and extensively diffused and embraced; the spiritual rule of Jesus, (the reception of him as the Son of God, and the consequent submission to his authority,) was, during the life of Paul, extended through the Roman empire, and his sovereignty had been owned by men of all ranks and distinctions; and (notwithstanding the most bitter opposition) by the influences of those glad tidings of pardon and everlasting life which he brought from God,

* To what degree the natural powers of our Lord were at once extended, after he entered into his glory, it is impossible for us to say. We know that his glorified body was no longer subject to the dominion of death: and we may reasonably suppose that with this change was communicated such an extension of knowledge and power, that his spiritual presence might extend to every part of his church. There are, too, several expressions which lead to the inference, that (during the apostolic age) he sometimes influenced the minds of his followers, so as to give them extraordinary supplies of strength and consolation. But at any rate, without entering too much into particulars, the general truth is certain, that *by peculiar interpositions he frequently did, during the apostolic age, specially direct* the concerns of the church. (3d Ed.)

aided by those striking displays of divine power with which the testimony of the Apostles was confirmed, he was in a most astonishing manner subduing all to himself. What joy, what triumph, must this scene afford to the benevolent Jesus! —to see myriads in every region, sharing in the great and glorious blessings of the Gospel, brought over by them from sin and darkness to holiness and happiness, to regard this as only the beginning of that kingdom of truth and righteousness, which would be gradually extended over the whole earth, and would put down all opposing authority and power, and to feel that he had been made the agent in producing all this good, must have been a full recompense for the shame and suffering which he endured, and was without doubt that joy for which he endured them, and so became the author of eternal salvation to all that believe in him. When we bear in mind that Paul was so much the honoured instrument and witness of the astonishing spread of the Gospel and rule of Jesus, can we wonder that he should speak in such elevated language respecting that power to which our Saviour had been exalted, and of that change in the moral world which was thereby rapidly effected? See p. 46, 50.

(5) Whether Jesus has at present any direct and personal concern in the regulation of his spiritual kingdom, or in any way, or at any time, directly influences the minds of his disciples, we have no certain information: it is not, however, unreasonable to suppose that the mental powers

of our exalted Lord have been continually extending; that he is acquainted with all the spiritual concerns of his disciples; and that he is still employed in some way or other for the benefit of his church. Such appears to be the idea of the Writer to the Hebrews, when he says (vii. 25.) 'Wherefore he is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him, since he EVER liveth to interpose for them.'* However, this may refer to nothing more than "the continual operation and effect of his miracles and doctrine in the world, by which men are brought to believe in God by him, and to be saved." The language of the Apostle Paul (*Rom.* viii. 34.) is similar, but does not necessarily refer to any but the then present time; 'Who is also on the right hand of God, who also interposeth for us,' apparently referring to the obvious supernatural interposition of Jesus in behalf of his religion.

(6) The most important office assigned to Jesus is that which will be the first great consummation of the purposes of God in the moral con-

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* Εις το εντυγχανειν υπερ αυτων. It is principally, if not solely, upon the employment of this word that the strange idea is founded, that Jesus is now employed *in interceding with God for his saints.* I am not aware how this can be shown to be consistent with the doctrine that Jesus made a full satisfaction to God for the sins of men: but where reason is not employed in the interpretation of Scripture, consistency will be no object, and need not be expected. The fact is, as Schleusner has remarked, (though he refers the expressions above quoted to the efficacious merits of the death of Christ,) that εντυγχανω ὑπερ τινος signifies, to do any thing for the benefit of any one. If Paul had meant "intercedeth with God," he would probably have added τῳ Θεῳ, as he does in *Rom.* xi. 2, 'How he maketh intercession to God against Israel.'

stitution of this world,—the awarding unto every man according to his works. It is probably impossible for us to know precisely what will be the nature of the awful proceedings of the day of judgment, and of the agency which Jesus will employ on that all-important occasion; but one thing is clear from the Scriptures, that the office was assigned to him as *Man*. Independent of the reason given by our Lord himself (*John* v. 27) for the appointment, which may be regarded as of somewhat doubtful import, the declaration of the Apostle Paul (*Acts* xvii. 31) expressly proves this assertion; for he says that God 'hath fixed a day, in which HE will judge the world in righteousness by the MAN whom HE hath appointed.' This I regard as a complete proof that the MAN Christ Jesus is to be our judge; and of course, whatever is requisite to enable him to be the agent of God in judging the world with wisdom and perfect justice, will be communicated to him by the mighty power and all-perfect rectitude of the ONLY WISE GOD.

(7) All will not even then have been accomplished: his kingdom will not yet have an end: he must reign till he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.—He who will have been their Saviour, their Sovereign, and their Judge, cannot be viewed by his disciples but with reverence and gratitude; and it may be a part of his highest and his endless reward, to lead them on in the ways of holiness and blessedness through the countless ages of eternity.—And to me it

seems by no means improbable, that it will be one glorious employment of the blessed Jesus, (and, under him, of those who through gospel guidance have reached the regions of bliss,) to communicate to the millions and millions of the rational creatures of God who shall have improved their one talent, and thereby attained to happiness of which they never received the promise or even the prospect, those views of the paternal character of the God of Love which the Gospel presents to us, free from all the imperfections which here cloud their lustre; and to make them all members of that happy fraternity, in which all shall unite in the universal song, 'Blessing and honour and glory and power be unto HIM that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever.'—But this is not all. With humble earnest expectation I look forwards, beyond the period of retribution (τον αιωνα) which is peculiarly the object of the revelation by Christ, to the more remote period when ALL ENEMIES *shall be put under his feet;* when ALL THINGS *shall be subdued to him;* when sin, and misery the offspring of sin, shall be annihilated; when death itself shall be destroyed; when *every* rational being (often by intense and awfully lasting anguish) shall have been purified from spiritual pollution, and made fit for blissful holiness; and when GOD SHALL BE ALL IN ALL.*

* I have stated my views on this subject more fully in the *Reply to Archbishop Magee*, p. 37—46, p. 280—288, and p. 365, &c.—I am, as yet, of opinion that the Christian Revelation was not

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John v. 22, 23. 'For the Father judgeth no one, but hath committed all judgment to the Son; that all should honour the Son, as they honour the Father, καθως τιμωσι τον πατερα.* He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father who sent him.'

The common rendering is, "EVEN AS they honour the Father." That this is not required by the original, any one may satisfy himself by turning to *Luke* vi. 36; where we find this injunction, 'Be ye therefore merciful as (καθως) your Father is merciful.' The general force of the particle is not *equality in degree*, but merely *likeness*.

The last part of *v.* 23, shows at once that the first has nothing to do with *worship* properly so called: nor is it any reason why we should *worship* Christ, that God hath appointed him to be our Judge: but this appointment is a reason why we should *honour* him with *reverential obedience;* and this I have no doubt was all our Saviour ever claimed, and only for the glory of HIM who sent him. In respect to religious worship, those honour him most, who, following his precepts and example, pray to the FATHER, and to HIM ALONE.

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* Τιμαω (like our own corresponding verb *honour*) is of very general import; and though one or two instances occur in which it refers to religious *worship*, this is by no means implied by the word itself. The honour which Jesus claimed, was that due to him as the messenger of God.

On account of a reference to this volume in *Proof from Scripture*, I think it necessary to add that the interpretation given in this 3d Ed. is the same as in that tract. And I solicit those who wish to enter more into this branch of the subject, to refer to the *Proof from Scripture* for a more complete detail of evidence; as well as a more full investigation of the arguments adduced in support of the Religious Worship of Christ.

Acts vii. 59. "And they stoned Stephen, calling upon *God*, and saying, Lord Jesus receive my spirit."

Our Translators have supplied "God" without any authority from the original; which should have been rendered, 'calling upon (*or* appealing to) *Jesus:*' or simply, 'invoking (*or* appealing) and saying, Lord Jesus,' &c. Here, however, is an express address to Jesus; the question is, whether it is a just precedent for prayer to him. That it is not, I feel convinced from the following considerations, even independently of the general arguments already adduced in p. 99—105.

(1) The martyr had been favoured with a personal manifestation of Jesus just before he was hurried out of the temple; and if that manifestation really were not then continued, (though it appears highly probable that it was,) the vivid impressions excited by it would naturally produce a lively conviction of the actual presence of his exalted Lord, and authorize his address to him as present with him. (2) He spoke of him (*v.* 56) as distinct from *God*, and as the *Son of Man*, (which circumstance is the more remarkable, because this appellation is, I believe, in no other instance employed by a disciple, though it frequently is by our Lord himself;) and he could not therefore regard him as the object of prayer, properly so called, still less as himself God. (3) There is an obvious and marked distinction between this pathetic exclamation, and his last prayer, when he kneeled down and cried LORD,

(not as before *Lord Jesus*, but, in the language he used, JEHOVAH,) lay not this sin to their charge. I consider this noble Martyr, then, as addressing his glorified Master, (who had himself passed through the pangs of death, and was now made Lord of the dead and the living,) in the language of affectionate grateful confidence, under the impression, and probably with the manifestation, of his actual personal presence with him; and regard his words as of this import; 'I am dying in thy cause, but thou art the Resurrection and the Life, and from thee I shall again receive my life: with full confidence in thy declarations I resign it into thy hands; Lord Jesus, receive my departing breath.'—Can any one suppose that this case, if really in opposition, which it is not, to the precepts and example of Jesus, on this important point, justifies the neglect of them?

2 *Cor.* xii. 8. 'For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.'

The Apostle had said, that in order to prevent his being too highly exalted on account of the frequency of supernatural communications, he was visited with some painful dispensation, (usually supposed to have been a paralytic affection,) which probably rendered 'his bodily presence weak and his speech contemptible,' (see ch. x. 10. and *Gal.* iv. 13); and he appears to have considered this affliction as likely to impede the success of his apostolic labours. 'Concerning this,' he continues, 'I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me: and he said to

me, My gracious aid is sufficient for thee, for my power (δυναμις) is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my weakness, that the power δυναμις) of Christ may rest upon me.'—It appears to me clear, that the Apostle addressed his request to Christ; the question is, as before, whether this affords a sufficient precedent for prayer to him, in opposition to his own precepts and example, and the precepts of the Old Testament. Plainly not, for the following reasons taken together. (1) The 9th verse implies, what we know was occasionally the fact, that our Lord was sensibly present with Paul, when Paul spoke to him. (2) Our Lord had received from the Father the promise of the spirit, and imparted it to his disciples; if therefore he had thought it right, he could certainly have miraculously cured the Apostle. (3) The reply of our Lord appears obviously to refer to the miraculous powers by which the preachings of the Apostles were rendered effectual. And as it was of the utmost importance that the Gospel should be *known* to have a divine origin, the insufficiency of the merely human means and instruments was requisite, in order to show that it was the power of God, and not the wisdom of man, which caused its extensive and rapid diffusion.

Rev. xxii. 20. 'Even so, come, Lord Jesus.'

I quote this, because some have thought that this is an example of prayer; but I apprehend that no candid reasoner, who reads the whole of the verse, can lay any stress upon it. It appears

to me obviously to be an address to Jesus, sensibly manifested to his Apostle.

Acts ix. 14, 'Here he hath authority to bind all that call on thy name,' *τους επικαλουμενους το ονομα σου.*—*Ib.* v. 21. 'Is not this he that destroyed them which called on this name in Jerusalem,' *τους επικαλουμενους το ονομα τουτο.*—*Ib.* xxii. 16. 'Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord,' *επικαλεσαμενος το ονομα αυτου. Thus* Griesbach *reads it: the* Received Text *has* *το ονομα του κυριου.*—1 *Cor.* i. 2. 'With all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord,' *τοις επικαλουμενοις το ονομα του κυριουἡμων.*

In these passages, (and these are all,) the Christians are designated as those WHO CALL ON THE NAME OF CHRIST JESUS. Does it imply that *they called upon him in the offering of* RELIGIOUS WORSHIP? and this so commonly, that (as in *Acts* ix. 21) the fact was, at an early period, one of notoriety, and that it led indifferent persons to employ the designation? I think certainly not for the following reasons. (1) The Christians of the apostolic age could not have thus directed their worship without some express command from Christ or his Apostles; and so far from such command having been given, we have on record various express injunctions from both, which are utterly inconsistent with the supposition that they ever directed the offering of religious worship to any other being or person than JEHOVAH, the FATHER. (2) The Jews, when urging their charges against the Apostles &c., never advert to such practice; which they certainly would have done, and with indignation, had it been known to exist.

There are two causes of the difficulty felt in these passages: (1) The not unfrequent use of similar expressions in the Old Testament, (sometimes also employed in the New,) in reference to Jehovah; and usually implying religious worship: *To call on Jehovah*, or *on the name of Jehovah*, includes every express act of religious service and worship.*

(2) Ονομα *name*, following שם in the Hebrew, often denotes, in reference to JEHOVAH, HIS

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* The passages in the New Testament where the word επικαλεομαι occurs *in reference to God* are the following: *Acts* ii. 21. (cited from *Joel*) 'Whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD, επικαλησεται το ονομα κυριου, shall be saved.' *Acts* xv. 17, 'All the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord,' εφ' ους επικεκληται το ονομα μου επ' αυτων. *Rom.* x. 12, 'The same Lord is rich in mercy to all that call upon him,' τους επικαλουμενους αυτον: *v.* 13, 'Whosoever shall call,' &c. (as in *Acts* ii. 21): *v.* 14, 'How shall they call on him, πως ουν επικαλησονται, in whom they have not believed?' 2 *Cor.* i. 23, "I call God for a record on my soul," μαρτυρα τον Θεον επικαλουμαι, more accurately, 'I appeal to God as a witness against my soul,' *i. e.* myself. 2 *Tim.* ii. 22. 'With them that call on the Lord,' των επικαλουμενων τον κυριον, out of a pure heart. *Heb.* xi. 16, 'God is not ashamed to be called their God,' Θεος επικαλεισθαι αυτων. 1 *Pet.* i. 17, 'If ye call on the Father,' ει πατερα επικαλειστε.

The verb occurs in the passive forms, in the sense of *called* or *surnamed*, in *Matt.* x. 3. *Luke* xxii. 3. *Acts.* i. 23. iv. 36. x. 5, 18, 32. xi. 13. xii. 12, 25. xv. 22. and *Heb.* xi. 16, already cited. In the active sense of *appeal*, it occurs in *Acts* xxv. 11, 12, 21, 25. xxvi. 32. and xxviii. 19; in 2 *Cor.* i. 23, already cited; and perhaps also in *Acts* vii. 59, where the object is not expressed.—In *James* ii. 7, 'that worthy name by which ye are called,' επικληθεν εφ' υμας, literally, 'which has been called upon you,' corresponds with *Acts* xv. 17.

The foregoing, with the four in p. 246, are all the passages in the N. T. in which the word, in any of its forms, occurs. Those in which it is connected with ονομα and refers to Jehovah, *viz.* *Acts* ii. 21. xv. 17. and *Rom.* x. 13, are derived from the O. T.; the first and the third are quoted from *Joel* ii. 32; the second from *Amos* ix. 12.

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and glorious perfections; except indeed that one which undoubtedly he must have deemed his highest glory, his DIVINE AUTHORITY, the AUTHORITY *which he possessed as sent and empowered by* GOD, *the* SOVEREIGN LORD *of heaven and earth.*

Ονομα in the sense of *command* and *authority* often occurs in reference to Jehovah, both in the Old Testament and in the New. Moses says *(Exod.* v. 23*)* 'Since I came to Pharaoh to speak in thy name,' by thy command and under thine authority; and so also *Daniel* (ch. ix. 6), in his prayer to Jehovah—'the prophets which spake in thy name.' In like manner our Lord declares *(John* v. 43*)* that he came in his Father's name; and (ch. x. 35) that his works were wrought in the name of his Father.

In the same sense it is repeatedly used in reference to Christ: it denotes his *divine authority or power:* it denotes also his doctrine taught by divine authority and supported by divine power; and sometimes it denotes the *profession of his religion. Faith in his name* is faith in his divine authority and doctrine; and *praying in his name*, or *doing any thing in his name*, is praying, or acting, according to his doctrines, under the influence of his principles, and owning his authority. To be *baptized in* or *into his name*, is to be baptized into the profession of his doctrine and of obedience to his authority; and to *work miracles in his name*, is to work them by power from him and authority given by him. The

NAME *of Christ* thus includes allegiance to him as our Sovereign, and submission to his divine authority as our Teacher and Saviour: and in whatever way persons CALLED UPON or APPEALED TO *the name of Christ*, it implied their owning allegiance and submission to him; it denoted that they acknowledged his divine authority, received his Gospel as from God, and submitted to him as their Lord and Master. To CALL UPON or APPEAL TO *the* NAME *of Christ*, is therefore perfectly equivalent with professing oneself a disciple and subject of Christ.

A person even now calls upon or appeals to the name of Christ, when he prays in his name, or acts or teaches in his name, that is with the express recognition of his divine authority: and in those days, when every thing was constantly done in the name of Christ, with an explicit recognition of his authority, with direct reference of miraculous power to him as the immediate source, and with avowed faith in his Gospel, it is no wonder that the disciples were described as persons who called upon, or appealed to, the name of Christ. When they worked miracles, they said, 'In the name of Jesus Christ;' when they taught, it was 'in the name of Christ;' when they suffered, (which they accounted their honour,) it was 'for the name of Christ;' when they called upon others to receive the Gospel, they exhorted them to be baptized 'in (or into) the name of Christ;' when they prayed, they prayed 'in the name of Christ;' and, in short,

'whatever they did, in word or deed, they did in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.'

Our expression '*call upon*,' though literal, is so much associated with the express invocation of a *person*, rather than an appeal to his authority, that I should prefer rendering επικαλεομαι, in this connexion, *I appeal to;* and that there is abundant justification of this rendering, see the note in p. 247. If it be said that *the name of Jesus* sometimes denotes, or at least may denote, *Jesus himself*, (as the *name of Jehovah* does *Jehovah himself*,) and that to *call upon the name of Jesus* is the same as to *call upon Jesus* in direct addresses to him, I have only to say, that I know no instance where the NAME *of Christ* has certainly this signification; that the meanings assigned above are universally admitted; that there is but one instance on record where a disciple did publicly so invoke his Master; that many instances are *recorded* where they called upon his name in the way which I have already described; and that the history authorizes the belief, that such was the constant practice of the first Christians.

On the whole, therefore, I conclude,—and I am fully satisfied with the conclusion,—that when the Christians were described as those who *called upon* or *appealed to the name of Christ*, no more was meant, than that they openly avowed their belief in his divine authority, and their allegiance to him; employing *his name* as their sanction, and expressly, and *by name*,

referring to him as the immediate source of their powers and of their doctrine.*

Heb. i. 6, 'And when he again bringeth the First-born into the world, he saith, And let all the messengers (*αγγελοι*) of God pay homage to him,' *προσκυνησατωσαν αυτῳ.*

If the passage really referred to superior celestial beings, it could not prove that they were enjoined to pay *religious* worship to Christ.† But it probably refers to the human messengers of God, and may be thus paraphrased: When God raised Jesus from the dead, (see p. 189,) HE, by that powerful testimony to his high commission, declared him superior to all other prophets and messengers of God.

2 *Pet.* iii. 18, 'To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.'

In this ascription I presume every Unitarian Christian would cordially unite, though he might, in some situations, find it requisite to declare, that he understands by it the glory which Jesus obtained by his fulfilment of the purposes for

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* *Acts* xxii. 16, implies that Ananias expected Paul, before he was baptized, expressly to acknowledge the divine authority of Christ, perhaps by declaring that he was doing this 'in the name of Jesus Christ.'

In the former editions of this work, I adopted the passive rendering of *επικαλεισθαι το ονομα, to be called by the name:* I have not, however, been able to find any sufficient authority for it; and I willingly relinquish it. In the above passage, the verb is in the middle form; and it probably should be so taken in the others in question. There is nothing in the original expression to prevent its being rendered *to call upon oneself the name:* but for this, too, I am not aware of any adequate authority in actual usage. Through these and other considerations, I have gradually arrived at the decision above stated,—in which, as most accordant, and indeed fully accordant, with the known and authorized import of the original words, as giving the whole force to each, and as completely borne out by the christian records, I am perfectly satisfied. (3d Ed.)

† See Appendix, No. IV.

which he came forth from God. To him be glory, the exalted glory, of being the author of eternal salvation to all who believe in and obey him; and may his dominion extend, till every one of the rational offspring of God own his sovereignty, till all acknowledge and obey the only true God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent. The blessings of the Gospel, by which millions and millions of millions will have been led on to holiness and happiness, originated in the free mercy of God; Jesus, by his obedience unto death, obtained the glory of being the Mediator by whom they were communicated to mankind; they claim the warmest tribute of gratitude; wherever they are cordially embraced, there will be willing obedient subjects of the kingdom of truth and righteousness: 'Blessing, therefore, and honour, and glory, and power, *be* unto Him that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb.' (*Rev.* i. 6. v. 13.*)

That the advocates for the opinion, that the Scriptures sanction the offering of religious worship to Jesus, are obliged to adduce such passages as those referred to in the last paragraph, is, in my apprehension, a decisive proof of the weakness of their cause. They have in fact nothing to do with the subject; and if the whole of the New Testament had been filled

* In *v.* 14, Griesbach leaves out the words 'Him that liveth for ever and ever.' This renders it possible, that the homage spoken of was paid both to Him who sat on the throne and to the Lamb. If this were the case, it may justly be regarded as parallel to the fact recorded in 1 *Chron.* xxix. 20.

with such expressions,* it would not have authorized the direct address to Jesus of thanksgiving and praise. There is, I believe, only one instance of the direct address of praise to him: *viz. Rev.* v. 8—10; and as to this passage, it is only requisite to remark two circumstances: in the first place, Jesus is represented as sensibly present when thus addressed; and secondly, the living creatures and the elders, in their new song, speak of Jesus as a *Man*,—for surely *God* could not have been slain and have redeemed men to God by his blood.

Two or three passages occur, which may seem to justify the DIRECT ADDRESSING OF THANKSGIVING TO JESUS. In 1 *Tim.* i. 12, the Apostle expresses his thankfulness to his Lord for having appointed him to the ministry; 'I thank,' εχω χαριν, or I am grateful to, 'Christ Jesus our Lord who hath strengthened me,' that is, given me the miraculous qualifications requisite for the office, 'that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry, &c.' Here however the Apostle does not address his Lord; and I do not see how it can be regarded as a precedent for more than, what every sincere Christian must feel, gratitude to him who hath done so much for the good of

* The truth is, we meet with only seven passages in which there is, in appearance, the ascription of glory to Jesus; and it is somewhat remarkable that there is not above one instance in the undisputed writings of Paul; *viz.* 2 *Tim.* iv. 18. In *Gal.* i. 5, the doxology plainly refers to God. The other instances are *Heb.* xiii. 21. 1 *Pet.* iv. 11. 2 *Pet.* iii. 18. *Rev.* i. 6. v. 13. The object of the doxology in the first two is somewhat doubtful.

all men.—*Col.* iii. 16, might be supposed to show that Christians were directed to sing hymns of grateful praise to Christ, but, instead of 'singing with thankfulness in your hearts to the Lord,' Griesbach has 'to God.'—*Eph.* v. 19, 'singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord' is certainly ambiguous; but as in the corresponding Epistle we find the Christians directed to sing praises to God, it is reasonable to conclude that the Apostle meant the same here.

There is only one other class of expressions which it will be requisite to notice under this head, *viz.* DEVOUT WISHES OF BLESSINGS FROM JESUS CHRIST; and the three following instances will serve as a sufficient specimen of the futility of such evidence in favour of the divine worship of Jesus. 1 *Cor.* i. 3: 'Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.' In this and similar benedictions, *grace* (χαρις) obviously denotes, all those blessings which are communicated by the Gospel. Jesus was the agent by whom God dispensed these blessings; and, in the Apostolical age, he was appointed to communicate those extraordinary powers by which they were most widely extended. I understand the Apostle therefore to say, 'May ye all possess the gracious blessings of the Gospel, and that peace which follows the sincere reception of it!' If in the words 'from our Lord Jesus Christ' there be any implied reference to *present* agency in the diffusion

of Gospel blessings, then I conceive we have no adequate scriptural evidence to authorize our employment of them; but they may still be used if it be clearly understood that they refer only to his having been originally the agent of God in bestowing those blessings on men.—No difficulty rests with expressions similar to *Gal.* vi. 18: 'The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,' the gracious blessings which he brought from God, 'be with your spirit.' Here is not even an implied reference to his then being the agent in the diffusion of those blessings. Even if the word *grace* could be shown to denote the *personal favour* of Christ, the devout wish that the disciples might possess that favour, surely cannot be strained into a prayer to Christ. I regard it, if a prayer, as a prayer to God, to Him whom Paul styles the only God, and the God of Jesus Christ.—2 *Thess.* ii. 16, 17: 'Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and our God and Father who hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope by *his* grace,' or gracious gift (of gospel blessings), 'comfort your hearts and establish you in every good word and work.' The intervening clause shows in what way God had granted everlasting comfort and hope to the Apostle, *viz.* by the gift of the Gospel; and the passage may only mean, May the blessed influences of the Gospel of Jesus comfort and strengthen you! If, however, it imply that our Saviour, by means of those powers which were intrusted to him, sometimes influenced the minds

of his followers in a supernatural way, it contains a devout wish that the Thessalonians might have such supernatural supplies of strength and consolation; but in that case it cannot be used in the present day, without scriptural evidence that Jesus now exercises those powers. It does appear to me, that this and some other passages refer to those peculiar interpositions by which Jesus, agreeably to the authority given him, directed the concerns of the church in the Apostolical age: see 1 *Cor.* i. 7, 8. *Eph.* iv. 11. 1 *Thess.* iii. 11. *John* xiv. 13, 14. *Phil.* ii. 9, 24. 1 *Tim.* i. 12. (and p. 228). If it do, it affords no ground to believe that such interpositions continue: they may, but we have no proof of them; and we therefore are not justified in employing any language which implies them.—Be the precise import, however, of this devout wish of the Apostle what it will, it is not prayer to Jesus, and in no way authorizes prayer to Jesus, and that is all which immediately concerns my purpose.

I have now, I believe, noticed all the modes of expression, and every essential passage, which can be considered as in any way authorizing the divine worship of Jesus; and when I consider that *there is not one precept in favour of it, not one certain example of prayer to Jesus, not one instance of the direct address of praise to him when not sensibly present, it appears to me almost incredible that the express, unambiguous, and continual directions of the Old Testament, the express*

and unambiguous declarations and uniform example of our Saviour himself, and the precepts and practice of the Apostles, have not prevented thinking and conscientious persons from offering religious worship to any being except Him respecting whom our Saviour himself says, 'THOU SHALT WORSHIP THE LORD THY GOD, AND TO HIM ONLY SHALT THOU PAY RELIGIOUS SERVICE.'*

CHAP. VII.

Consideration of the Passages which are supposed to prove the PRE-EXISTENCE *of our Lord.*

THIS doctrine supposes a circumstance altogether miraculous, and what, from the very nature of the case, could only be known by

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* I cannot forbear subjoining to this Section the following impressive passage from Mr. Aspland's Discourse entitled *Vindication of Unitarian Worship.* "A passage in the Communion Service of the Established Church expresses our convictions, and prescribes the course that in conscience we ought to pursue.—'It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times, and in all places, give thanks unto thee, O Lord, Holy Father, Almighty and Everlasting God.' This is a sentence worthy of a Christian assembly, breathing the spirit of prophets and apostles: but it almost surpasses belief, that to this admirable prayer there is attached in the rubric a direction, that 'These words, *Holy Father*, must be omitted on Trinity Sunday.' Unholy day! that requires that the knee should not then bow to the only true God! Unchristian doctrine! that, for the sake of consistency, prohibits the disciples of Jesus from complying with the plainest, the most solemn, the most frequently repeated of the divine injunctions,—from glorifying God, *even* the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!"

express revelation. As the simple pre-existence is not held in connexion with the doctrine of vicarious punishment, few, probably, of its advocates consider it as of any importance in the Christian scheme of salvation (see p. 18); and those must surely allow, that its importance depends upon its being known. The question then is, whether this doctrine is explicitly and distinctly declared in the New Testament; and if not, whether there are any passages which so far imply it, that they cannot receive an adequate explanation, in accordance with the opinion that Jesus was a man in the usual sense of the term.

Now it deserves well to be considered, that *if Jesus were a being who existed in a state of great glory and happiness before his human birth, and was then united with a human frame,* (which is the doctrine of pre-existence,) *then he was not truly and properly man;** *and, consequently, every*

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* I do not think it necessary to enter into the question how far a being not human, *could* become *truly* man, because our convictions respecting it must ultimately depend upon revelation. But if the Hartleyan doctrine of association be well founded, and the whole system of internal feelings, whether intellectual ideas, or affections, arise from the reliets of sensations variously connected or blended together by that ever-active principle,—and if, what is indisputably the fact, sensations do not affect and modify the internal system of a man as they affect and modify that of an infant or a youth,—then it follows, either (1) that the pre-existent being possessed a human system of thought and affection before his human birth, which is inconsistent with every supposition; or, (2) all the peculiarities of the pre-existent being, even to his very consciousness of pre-existence, must have been annihilated, when he became susceptible of sensations by means of a human body; or, (3) he could not, when that body came to maturity of growth, have possessed an internal system of ideas and affections similar to that of man. No other case seems possible; and of these, the last must, I should suppose,

passage in which he is called man, *and every expression and reasoning apparently founded upon his being* man, *must be understood figuratively.* Admitting the doctrine of the simple humanity of our Lord, a very small number of passages must be interpreted figuratively; but, on the other hand, various plain and direct expressions and reasonings, and the whole tenor of the narratives of his ministry, are to be taken in their literal and obvious sense: admitting the doctrine of the pre-existence, some of those few passages may be taken literally; but then those plain and direct expressions and reasonings (to say nothing of the whole tenor of the narratives of our Lord's ministry) must be taken in a figurative sense. The one doctrine I allow is not without difficulties; but they are few, and I think light: those which affect the other are very numerous, as well as great; I must say that to myself they appear insurmountable.

In the examination of those passages which are thought to favour the doctrine of pre-existence, I shall chiefly follow the order of the Table, p. 86—91: and I here beg leave to call the attention of the reader to the Table, in order that they may give its due weight to the circumstance, that of the eight Apostles or Evan-

be preferred: and if so, every passage of the N. T. which represents our Saviour as acting, feeling, and thinking as a man, is to be regarded as a direct argument against the doctrine of pre-existence; and though an express declaration of Jesus or an Apostle would of course outweigh this inference, yet till such express declaration is produced, I must consider the doctrine of simple pre-existence as totally destitute of adequate evidence.

gelists whose writings are contained in the New Testament, *five, (viz. Matthew, Mark, Luke, James,* and *Jude,) have said nothing which in any way refers to this supposed fact,* though the first three have written the history of our Lord's ministry, and, as is generally supposed, two of them an account of his birth; and that of the remaining three, *(viz.* Peter, John, and Paul,) *Peter, if he at all refer to it, does so very obscurely,* and *Paul,* though he may be thought by many to speak less obscurely, *no where either asserts the fact, or employs language necessarily implying the truth of it.* Is it conceivable that such a fact should be unknown to any of the New Testament writers? or that, if known, any should have omitted to mention it expressly and unambiguously? That the writings of John in no way declare this fact, I hope to show; and I refer to this striking scantiness of evidence, to lead our readers to my own conclusion, that obscure or ambiguous passages, seeming to imply this doctrine, ought, if it can be done justly, to be explained by such as are clear and unambiguous,—and that the language of one Apostle ought not, unnecessarily, to be interpreted so as to oppose the plain and obvious meaning of the rest.

1 *Pet.* iii. 18—20. 'For Christ also once suffered for sins, (a just one for the unjust,) that he might bring us to God; being put to death in the flesh (comp. iv. 1), but restored to life by the spirit,' that is, by the miraculous interposition of the power of God. 'By which *spirit,*' by the miraculous powers which he was enabled to communicate to his Apostles (*Acts* ii. 33), 'having departed to heaven, he proclaimed deliverance even to the spirits

in prison,'* that is, to those who were slaves to sin and ignorance, such persons as the Apostle afterwards (ch. ii. 6) calls the *dead;* 'who formerly were disobedient, when the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, &c.'

It appears to me clear, that the agency of Jesus here spoken of, was subsequent to his resurrection; that the direct reference of πορευθεις, *having gone*, is to his ascension; and that therefore this passage is more in point to prove the pre-existence of the spiritual captives to whom Jesus, by his Apostles, proclaimed deliverance, than that of Jesus himself, to which it can have no reference. Peter, however, obviously, does not mean that the same *individuals*, but that the same *class* of persons, had formerly resisted the divine warning communicated to them by Noah.

Gal. iv. 4, 14. These passages have been already considered in p. 34, 35.

1 *Cor.* x. 4, 'For they drank of the spiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was the Christ.'

The Apostle had just said, they all ate the same spiritual food, and drank the same spiritual drink, probably meaning food and drink given them in a miraculous manner. For the same reason, probably, he calls the rock spiritual.

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* Εν ῳ και τοις εν φυλακῃ πνευμασι πορευθεις εκηρυξεν. The expression strikingly corresponds with that in *Luke* iv. 19: 'He hath sent me to proclaim (κηρυξαι) deliverance to the captives; and also with the Greek of *Is.* xiii. 7: 'I have appointed thee—to lead out those who are bound from their bonds, and from the prison-house, εξ οικου φυλακης. In *Acts* i. 10, 11, πορευομαι is used twice in reference to our Lord's ascension. The Apostle in the use of πνευμασι, *spirits*, appears to refer to the spiritual bondage of those to whom the glad tidings of the Gospel were delivered.—On the whole passage, see the notes in the Improved Version.

When he says that rock was the Christ, he cannot be understood literally upon *any* scheme; and unless 'This is my body,' be admitted as a proof of the doctrine of transubstantiation, the expression in question cannot be admitted as a proof of the pre-existence. It probably means, this rock "was an emblem and representation of the Christ," for instance, in the rich diffusion of the blessings communicated by him. Compare *John* iv. 14.

1 *Cor.* x. 9, 'Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them' (the Israelites) 'also tempted, and were destroyed by serpents.'

The true reading of this text is very uncertain. The evidence of Manuscripts and Fathers decidedly favours *the Lord*, which, however, Griesbach, though he prefixes his mark of high probability, does not introduce into the text. The evidence of the Versions favours the common reading. The Alexandrian MS. has *God*. "If we read *Christ*," says Archbishop Newcome, "the sense is, Nor let us tempt, try, prove, provoke Christ now, as some of them did God at that time:" and, whatever be meant, from a reading so doubtful no inference could be fairly drawn.—I think the passage simply means, Let us not be rebellious and distrustful towards the Messiah, as some of the Israelites also were rebellious and distrustful, and perished by serpents.*

1 *Cor.* xv. 47, 'The first man *was* from the earth, earthy; the second man *will be* [the Lord] from heaven.'

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* See *Reply to Magee*, App. D. for a consideration of the true reading in this passage, and of Archbishop Magee's remarks upon it.

referring to him as the immediate source of their powers and of their doctrine.*

Heb. i. 6, 'And when he again bringeth the First-born into the world, he saith, And let all the messengers (αγγελοι) of God pay homage to him,' προσκυνησατωσαν αυτῳ.

If the passage really referred to superior celestial beings, it could not prove that they were enjoined to pay *religious* worship to Christ.† But it probably refers to the human messengers of God, and may be thus paraphrased: When God raised Jesus from the dead, (see p. 189,) HE, by that powerful testimony to his high commission, declared him superior to all other prophets and messengers of God.

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In the former editions of this work, I adopted the passive rendering of επικαλεισθαι το ονομα, *to be called by the name*: I have not, however, been able to find any sufficient authority for it; and I willingly relinquish it. In the above passage, the verb is in the middle form; and it probably should be so taken in the others in question. There is nothing in the original expression to prevent its being rendered *to call upon oneself the name*: but for this, too, I am not aware of any adequate authority in actual usage. Through these and other considerations, I have gradually arrived at the decision above stated,—in which, as most accordant, and indeed fully accordant, with the known and authorized import of the original words, as giving the whole force to each, and as completely borne out by the christian records, I am perfectly satisfied. (3d Ed.)

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That the advocates for the opinion, that the Scriptures sanction the offering of religious worship to Jesus, are obliged to adduce such passages as those referred to in the last paragraph, is, in my apprehension, a decisive proof of the weakness of their cause. They have in fact nothing to do with the subject; and if the whole of the New Testament had been filled

* In *v.* 14, Griesbach leaves out the words 'Him that liveth for ever and ever.' This renders it possible, that the homage spoken of was paid both to Him who sat on the throne and to the Lamb. If this were the case, it may justly be regarded as parallel to the fact recorded in 1 *Chron.* xxix. 20.

hopes and prospects, &c. In some such sense we must understand the Apostle, when he speaks (ch. vi. 10) of himself and fellow-labourers in the Gospel, 'AS POOR, yet making many RICH; as HAVING NOTHING, and yet POSSESSING ALL things;' and in a similar manner we must understand the words of our Lord himself, when he directs his servant John (*Rev.* ii. 9) to say to the church at Smyrna, 'I know thy [works and] affliction, and POVERTY, (yet thou art RICH.') In this sense, however, the Apostle can scarcely be here understood, since he refers to real privation for the good of men; but if it be admitted, as I most certainly believe, that our Saviour, by means of his miraculous powers, could at all times have obtained possession of worldly riches and greatness, then we have a simple and almost literal explanation of the expression: For your sakes he led a life of poverty and suffering, though he had at his command the means of wealth and power and glory.*

* If it could be shown that επτωχευσε must be rendered, *became* (not *was*) poor, it still remains to be shown that the expression 'being rich' refers to a state prior to our Lord's birth. I have already remarked that it could not, even then, be understood literally; and it seems to me clear enough, that it might as well refer to that period (see *Matt.* iv. 8. *Luke* iv. 6) when we know that he had *worldly* power, wealth, and glory within his grasp, and rejecting which he chose a life of humiliation and suffering, as to one in which he could not have possessed *temporal* riches. Without doubt, however, επτωχευσε is most justly rendered *he was poor*, (see Improved Version;) but I wished to show that the advocates for the pre-existent hypothesis cannot adduce this passage as a proof of it, because it is not only capable of two renderings, one of which does not suit that hypothesis, but the other also admits of a just interpretation which has no reference to it. Yet it is upon such passages that the doctrine rests for its evidence.

Rom. i. 3, 'Concerning his Son (who was born of the race of David as to natural descent, *and* powerfully declared *to be the* Son of God, as to *the* spirit of holiness, by his resurrection from the dead), *even* Jesus Christ our Lord.'

If *spirit of holiness* signify *the holy spirit*, the Apostle obviously means that Jesus Christ, according to his natural descent, was of the race of David, (that is, as to nature was a man descended from David,) and by the communion of the holy spirit to him at his baptism, became the Son of God; and that this exalted designation was most powerfully confirmed by his resurrection from the dead. If it signify a *holy disposition*, the passage loses much of its force, representing Jesus as a son of God in the same light in which all his followers may be sons of God; comp. viii. 14, 'for as many as are led by a divine spirit, πνευματι Θεου, they are sons of God.

In this passage, κατα σαρκα, *as to natural descent*, is used without the article, as it also is in ch. ix. 3. (see p. 136, *note)*; but in ch. ix. 5. it is used with the article, το κατα σαρκα. This "must make some difference," it has been said,* "and what "can its use be, unless to remind us that Christ "was of Israel, *only* according to the flesh; but "that in truth he had also a higher nature, of "which he proceeds immediately to speak?" The employment of the article in ch. ix. 5, is obviously founded on the fact, that Jesus was of Israelites as to *natural* descent only, and that as

* See Mr. Veysie's Second Letter, p. 108.

to spiritual descent he was the Son of God,—that he had his commission, his doctrine, and his miraculous powers, by immediate communication from his God and Father. If Paul had wished to direct the attention of the Roman disciples to the lamented fact, that the Jews were his own brethren, as to natural descent *only*, he might have used the article in *v.* 3, as he has in *v.* 5. If it be said that the force of the article in *v.* 5, would not be readily perceived by the Roman disciples, unless they had received the doctrine of two natures, and believed, with the modern orthodox, that Jesus was a God-man,*—I reply, that if they had felt any difficulty on this head, it must have been because they had forgotten the Apostle's own distinction in the beginning of his Epistle. Jesus was of the race of David as to his natural descent; and if he had not been so, he could not have been the Messiah: but he was more, he was the Son of God.

I may add here, that those persons manifest little regard to truth and candour, who assert that the Unitarians (or Socinians as they are pleased to term us) maintain that Jesus was a *mere* man. *We believe with the Apostle Paul, that* as to nature *Jesus was a* man *descended from David, but that* as to the divine communications *of knowledge and power, which God made to him for purposes the most important, he was the* Son of God; *and as such, we revere his authority, and own his claims upon our implicit and submissive obedience.*

* On the use of this word, see p. 38, *note*.

Rom. viii. 3. 'God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh.'

It has been hence inferred that Jesus existed before his human birth; that he was sent from a state of holiness and happiness "to live, as we do, in flesh, frail and liable to sin." Why Jesus is called God's *own* Son, has been already considered p. 188; his being *sent* merely refers to his commission; and he was in the likeness of *sinful* flesh, since "notwithstanding the holiness of his character and the dignity of his office, he was treated like a sinner and an outcast." See Improved Version. The passage admits of a convenient interpretation upon the pre-existent scheme; but the word *likeness* more countenances the opinion of the Gnostic Christians, that the Christ was a man in appearance only. If, however, it admit of a just representation, as assuredly it does, upon the opinion that Jesus was really a man, and as to nature a man only, it cannot prove any thing in opposition to it.

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Heb. vii. 3. 'Having neither beginning of days nor end of life.'

The Author of the Epistle, speaking of *Melchisedec*, represents him as 'without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life,' or (as Wakefield freely renders this part of the verse) as one 'of whose father, mother, pedigree, birth, and death, we have no account:'—so far the Writer does not speak of Melchisedec as resembling Christ; but if he had, his words, if, by *inference*, they proved any thing contrary to the simple humanity of Christ, would *directly* prove the same with respect to Melchisedec: the resemblance, however as stated by the Writer, is not brought into view till the following clause, 'but resem-

bling the Son of God, remaineth a priest perpetually.'

Heb. x. 5. 'Wherefore, when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me.'

I am not aware whether this text is generally considered as supporting the doctrine of pre-existence; but it appears to me to afford some countenance to it. Two things, however, must be taken into account; that according to the general or even uniform usage of the New Testament, the phrase *coming into the world*, does not denote coming out of another place or state of existence into this, but *coming forth from retirement or obscurity into the world, for the accomplishment of some important purpose;* and secondly, that whatever be the precise meaning of the expression σωμα δε κατηρτισω μοι, *a body hast thou appointed for me*, the Writer has merely adopted it from the Septuagint version of *Psalm* xl. 6; where the Psalmist applies it to himself. As it is obviously put in opposition to burnt offerings and sacrifices, it probably signifies, that God hath enjoined, rather than sacrifices, the proper regulation of the bodily appetites and affections, the subjection of all worldly desires; and if so, the clause might have been rendered, 'thou hast ordained for me the actions of my life.' This well accords with *v.* 7. 9; and with the use which this Writer makes of σωμα, *body*, in ch. x. 22.*

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to spiritual descent he was the Son of God,—that he had his commission, his doctrine, and his miraculous powers, by immediate communication from his God and Father. If Paul had wished to direct the attention of the Roman disciples to the lamented fact, that the Jews were his own brethren, as to natural descent *only*, he might have used the article in *v.* 3, as he has in *v.* 5. If it be said that the force of the article in *v.* 5, would not be readily perceived by the Roman disciples, unless they had received the doctrine of two natures, and believed, with the modern orthodox, that Jesus was a God-man,*—I reply, that if they had felt any difficulty on this head, it must have been because they had forgotten the Apostle's own distinction in the beginning of his Epistle. Jesus was of the race of David as to his natural descent; and if he had not been so, he could not have been the Messiah: but he was more, he was the Son of God.

I may add here, that those persons manifest little regard to truth and candour, who assert that the Unitarians (or Socinians as they are pleased to term us) maintain that Jesus was a *mere* man. *We believe with the Apostle Paul, that* as to nature *Jesus was a* man *descended from David, but that* as to the divine communications *of knowledge and power, which God made to him for purposes the most important, he was the* Son of God; *and as such, we revere his authority, and own his claims upon our implicit and submissive obedience.*

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clause.* The meaning probably is, He that cometh after me, is before me in dignity and power; for he is "the great object of my ministry, to prepare whose way I have been sent forth." Nearly the same words occur in *v.* 30, 'After me cometh a man, ανηρ, who hath become before me, for he was my principal.'

John vii. 58. "Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am," πριν Αβρααμ γενεσθαι, εγω ειμι.

There are four modes of interpreting this passage. I. Christ here declares to the Jews, that he was the great Being known to their forefathers by the name I AM. II. Without intimating any thing of this nature, he declares that he actually existed before the birth of Abraham. III. He simply asserts that his work and mission were fixed in the divine purpose before the birth of Abraham. IV. He declares no more than that before the Patriarch could be what God had promised, *the Father of nations*, he himself must be received as the Messiah: 'before he becomes ABRAHAM *(the Father of nations)* I am *he*.'†

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* "The word πρωτος is used in the sense of a chief or principal, *Mark* vi. 21. *Luke* xix. 47. 1 *Tim.* i. 15, 16. Compare *Matt.* iii. 11. *Mark* i. 8. *Luke* iii. 16. 'He that cometh after me is mightier than I.'" See Impr. Version. That there is very little authority for the common rendering of this clause, and abundance for that here given, see Schleusner, 2. 5.

† Perhaps I ought to add to this enumeration, the recent hypothesis of Dr. Pye Smith, who is of opinion that "Jesus, speaking "in the dialect of his country, most probably used no verb at all;" but said אני הוא, I HE, which Hebrew phrase, he remarks, the Septuagint (in *Deut.* xxxii. 39. *Is.* xli. 4. xliii. 10, 13. xlvi. 4. xlviii. 12) renders εγω ειμι. (*Script. Test.* Vol. II, p. 169.) But

The following facts may be stated here as preliminary to the consideration of these interpretations.

(1) The original words here translated *I am*, are repeatedly rendered *I am (he)*, with the ellipsis supplied. To the woman of Samaria (ch. iv. 26), our Lord says 'I that speak to thee am *he*:' in this very conference he twice uses the expression; *v.* 24, 'if ye believe not that I am *he*;' and *v.* 28, 'then shall ye know that I am *he*, and that I do nothing of myself:' when conversing with his disciples (ch. xiii. 19) he says, that 'ye may believe that I am *he*:' and when speaking of the persons who came with Judas to apprehend him (ch. xviii. 5, 6, 8), he said 'I am *he*,' *i. e.* 'Jesus of Nazareth.' In all these cases the words refer to himself, with different force according to the circumstances, and are rendered 'I am *he*.' In ch. vi. 20, the same expression of our Lord is rendered, 'It is I.'

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as he still translates the clause, "Before Abraham existed, I myself existed," it does not appear to be essentially different from the second class. My respected opponent, the late Mr. Veysie, thought that our Lord said, אני אהיה, I—I AM, meaning I *am* the I AM. Perhaps Dr. Pye Smith's opinion as to the original expression is the more probable; but as I am quite satisfied with St. John as a translator of our Lord's words, and as, at any rate, we cannot know what these were with certainty, I am only solicitous to ascertain what the Apostle meant when he represented in Greek what Christ said in the language of Judæa. And I feel confident that he did not consider his Lord as making the assertion Mr. Veysie attributed to him; and I have no doubt, that if our Lord used the words Dr. Pye Smith attributes to him, the Apostle understood him to mean the same as in the other places where the phrase occurs. Whatever were the original words, St. John's Greek, allowing him to be his own interpreter, must be rendered in English '*I am* he;' with such associated force as the context requires. See p. 286, *note*.

In *Matt.* xxiv. 5, we find our Lord declaring, (when prophesying the fate of Jerusalem,) 'Many will come in my name, saying, I am the Christ,' εγω ειμι ὁ χριστος: but in the corresponding passages of *Mark* (ch. xiii. 6), and *Luke* (ch. xxi. 8), we find simply 'I am,' εγω ειμι, 'I am *he*.' And once more, to return to the Gospel of *St. John*, the blind man declares (ch. ix. 9) 'I am,' εγω ειμι, 'I am *he*.'

(2) Even if the present *I am*, were ever used in the New Testament in the sense of *I was*, (which it is not,) still, as the above mode of expression so often occurs, in reference to our Lord and others, in the sense which is sufficiently well represented by *I am he*, there must be some very strong reason to authorize a different rendering; especially as our Lord had before employed the expression twice in this conference with the Jews.

(3) Though the verb γινεσθαι *(become)* occurs above ninety times in the writings of St. John, he never uses it in the sense of *to be born;* and no instance occurs in which it denotes *simple existence*, as ειναι *(to be)* sometimes does. The clause cannot be justly rendered 'Before Abraham *existed;* nor, with sufficient authority, 'Before Abraham *was born*.*

* What reason can be assigned, why St. John should repeatedly use the cognate verb γεννασμαι in the sense of *to be born*, and γινομαι in no other instance, and yet use it here? And, in like manner, why he should use εγω ειμι repeatedly with the *present* force, and in no instance with the *past*, and yet use it here with the *past*, when he had another form of the verb to denote the past; and

(4) The form of the verb here used, γενεσθαι, *generally* throughout the New Testament, and *always* in St. John's writings, has a future signification: when joined with prepositions of time, it always has it: and in the only other passage where it occurs with πριν, *before*, it must have it: *viz.* ch. xiv. 29, 'And now I have told you before it come to pass, πριν γενεσθαι, that when it comes to pass, οταν γενηται, ye may believe.'

I now proceed to a few remarks on each interpretation separately.

I. Some maintain, that when our Lord said to the Jews "I am," εγω ειμι, he meant to declare that he is the I AM.

If the Royal Translators, or rather Tyndal, (for the error originated with him,) had rendered the expression here as elsewhere, (see p. 274,) 'I am *he*,' it is probable few would have entertained this opinion. That it was not the opinion of St. John, or of the other disciples, or of the enemies of Christ, we have abundant reason to assert. His enemies, had they understood him to assume to himself the peculiar appellation of JEHOVAH, would have found no difficulty in obtaining condemning witnesses against him. They themselves heard his words, and could not have forgotten them. That the disciples of Christ did not, during his ministry on earth, consider him as *truly God*, still less as JEHOVAH, used to be acknowledged by all; and in my

this too though the analogy of his native language would lead to the *future?*

judgment cannot reasonably be denied: but if they had understood him to call himself the I AM, or they must either have regarded him as Jehovah, have deserted him for his supposed impiety.—That St. John, when recording in Greek the words of his Lord in Syro-Chaldaic, did not so understand him, we are certain, for he would surely have said, following the Septuagint, εγω ειμι ὁ Ων, or, at least, εγω ὁ Ων, *I am he who is;** and at any rate could not have employed an expression which he has so often used with a different force, and which is *in itself* incapable of denoting "I am the I AM."

But even if such interpretation had been allowable by the Greek, it must have been rejected by the authority of other parts of this very conference of our Lord with the Jews. Our Lord not only referred his doctrines *(v. 26)* to the FATHER as their source, and declared *(v. 28)* 'I do nothing of myself,'—he not only said to the Jews *(v. 40)* that he was a MAN who told them the truths which he heard from God, and *(v. 42)* that he came not of himself, but that HE sent him,—but *(v. 54)* expressly declared that his FATHER was the Being whom the Jews regarded as their God. Now then, if

* It appears nearly certain, that the true rendering of אשר אהיה אהיה, in *Exod.* iii. 14, is, *I will be what I will be:* "and most probably, as (Dr. Pye Smith observes,) it was not intended as a name, but as a declaration of the certain fulfilment of all the promises of God, especially those which related to the deliverance of the Israelites." He therefore thinks there is no sufficient ground to sustain the idea that our Lord alluded to this divine appellation.

we admit this testimony of Christ, in its plain and obvious, and (as far as I can see) its only sense, we must allow that the FATHER is that Being whom the Jews called GOD; and if so, that he is JEHOVAH, the GOD *of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, the great Being who said I AM THAT I AM, and commanded Moses to tell the Israelites, 'I AM hath sent me:' and, if JEHOVAH, the ONLY JEHOVAH; for JEHOVAH HIMSELF declared that there is NONE BESIDES HIM, and made this truth a fundamental article of the Jewish religion.

From the force naturally given, in the reflecting mind, to the appellation I AM, many seem to have an undefined conviction that our Lord meant at least to assert his possession of those attributes of self-existence and unchangeableness which the words of Jehovah himself, as usually translated, really denote. Let them fully consider the plain declarations of our Lord and his Apostles, already so often cited, and especially the fact that CHRIST JESUS, though now he lives for evermore, WAS DEAD; and this impression must surely disappear from the mind. But

II. If our Lord here used the words εγω ειμι, *I am*, in the sense of *existence* merely, they *could* prove no more than his *simple pre-existence*. I much doubt, however, whether they can justly be translated so as to refer to that doctrine, even if it had previously been proved: certainly not according to the force of the tense in the language of Judæa, which our Lord must have

used, if he used any verb; and what is not hypothetical, certainly not according to the usage of St. John and the other New Testament writers in reference to γενεσθαι and ειμι, as already stated in the general observations.*

I know nothing to recommend that translation of this passage, which makes it yield support to the doctrine of pre-existence, but early impressions. "Before Abraham was born, I was," has no known *grammatical* support in the New Testament; and I can perceive no other.

III. Most Unitarian Commentators, perceiving the inconsistency of this rendering with the general tenor of the evangelical history, thus interpret the passage.

Our Lord had said (*v.* 56) that Abraham earnestly desired to see his day, 'and he saw it,' *i.e. foresaw* it, 'and was glad.' Here the Jews interrupt him, with a perversion of his meaning; 'Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?' Our Lord had not said a word implying this, and he does not rectify their misapprehension, but justifies "his own expression, by declaring that he was designated to his office before Abraham was born, *v.* 58: this designation, therefore, might have been revealed to the Patriarch."†

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* The tense which has the *present* force in Hebrew, being in reality the *future*, the most literal rendering of it would surely be, *I shall be;* and if St. John had not repeatedly employed the same Greek expression, I should have considered *I shall be* as most closely representing the force of the original expression.

† See the Improved Version.

In favour of this explanation it is observed, that "it was no uncommon thing among the Jews, to speak of things as actually existing, which only existed in the divine determination, (see *Luke* xx. 37, 38); and the blessings of the Christian dispensation are often represented in the New Testament as the object of God's eternal purpose and decree, *Eph.* i. 4. 2 *Tim.* i. 9. 1 *Pet.* i. 20."* To this may be added, that the language of our Lord himself in *Matt.* xxii. 30, together with the phraseology in *v.* 23. *Luke* xx. 36. *Acts* xxiii. 8. corroborates the remark of Mr. Wakefield, that "the peculiar use of the present tense in the usage of scriptural expressions, is to imply determination and certainty."

Against this interpretation, the 2d, 3d, and 4th observations (p. 275) weigh strongly in my mind; and notwithstanding the arguments of Mr. Belsham in his *Calm Inquiry*, and those of Kuinoel in his *Commentary*, and of Dr. Pye Smith in his *Scripture Testimony*, I still feel a decided preference to that which I am now about to state.†

IV. To appreciate this interpretation correctly, it is requisite to consider the connexion. In *v.* 47, our Lord declared to the Jews, that the

* See Mr. Belsham's *Letters on Arianism*, p. 112.—And see also his full examination of the passage, and his arguments against the fourth interpretation, in the *Calm Inquiry*, which was published after the last edition of this volume. (3d. Ed.)

† In this there is one essential improvement on the rendering given in the former editions, in which I followed Mr. Bretland (*Discipulus*) and the older Socinians: they translate πριν Αβρααμ γενεσθαι, "before Abraham shall become *Abraham*," making it elliptical as to the predicate: the literal rendering is, 'before *he* shall become Abraham,' *i.e.* the *Father of many nations*.

cause of their unbelief was their ungodly disposition. Indignant at this, they charge him with wild insanity. In words full of grand and benevolent import, he repels the absurd charge; declaring that his object was the honour of HIM who sent him, and that HE would avenge his cause. Still solicitous to save them from impending judgments, he then sets before them (*v.* 51) the blessed effects of obedience; but the words of terror and the words of love were alike unheeded. With malignant sarcasm they referred his words to *temporal* death, and maintained that they completely proved him to be mad. They ask him (*v.* 53) 'Art thou greater than our father Abraham, who is dead? and the Prophets—they too are dead: whom makest thou thyself?' Much he might have replied, founded on what they had already seen and heard, to show his great superiority to those servants of God in older times; but his answer was more accordant with the humility of the meek and lowly Jesus, blended in fine proportion with the dignity of the Son of God: [54] 'If I glorify myself, my glory is nothing; it is my FATHER that glorifieth me, of whom ye say that HE IS YOUR GOD: [55] And yet ye have not known him; but I know him,' am fully acquainted with his character and secret purposes; 'and if,' by actions or words inconsistent with those purposes, 'I should say, I know him not, I should speak falsely like yourselves: But I know him,' I am fully acquainted with his secret purposes,

we admit this testimony of Christ, in its plain and obvious, and (as far as I can see) its only sense, we must allow that the FATHER is that Being whom the Jews called GOD; and if so, that he is JEHOVAH, the GOD *of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, the great Being who said I AM THAT I AM, and commanded Moses to tell the Israelites, 'I AM hath sent me:' and, if JEHOVAH, the ONLY JEHOVAH; for JEHOVAH HIMSELF declared that there is NONE BESIDES HIM, and made this truth a fundamental article of the Jewish religion.

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eloquent chapter on faith,) not having received the promises, but HAVING SEEN THEM AFAR OFF, and having hailed them,'—hailed them as the dawn of a day whose sun would never set, and whose beams would illuminate those who sat in darkness, and in the region and shadow of death.

The Apostle Paul, in his Epistle to the Galatians, particularly argues from this promise to Abraham, that God would introduce the Gentiles into a state of privilege and blessing; and declares that Christ exposed himself to an accursed death, in order that through him the blessings of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles: see especially ch. iii. 7—14, and *v.* 29. These glad tidings, says the Apostle, *v.* 8, were before proclaimed to Abraham, 'In thee all nations shall be blessed.' And Abraham saw this day, the day of the Messiah, afar off,—he saw it too in part begun by the fulfilment of the divine promises to himself,—and he was glad. No wonder that our Lord should refer to the accomplishment of the divine declaration in himself; and that he should intimate the necessity of his being received as the Messiah, before the Patriarch could become the spiritual father of many nations: and what could be more appropriate, or more full of force and dignity?

I have only one other observation to make by way of illustration. No one acquainted with the Scriptures of the Old Testament can be ignorant, that it was very common among the

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* See Mr. Belsham's *Letters on Arianism*, p. 112.—And see also his full examination of the passage, and his arguments against the fourth interpretation, in the *Calm Inquiry*, which was published after the last edition of this volume. (3d. Ed.)

† In this there is one essential improvement on the rendering given in the former editions, in which I followed Mr. Bretland (*Discipulus*) and the older Socinians: they translate πριν Αβρααμ γενεσθαι, "before Abraham shall become *Abraham*," making it elliptical as to the predicate: the literal rendering is, 'before he shall become Abraham,' *i.e.* the *Father of many nations*.

the sacred historian, *Gen.* xvii. 1—5, 'Jehovah appeared unto Abram, and said—behold I make a covenant with thee, and thou shalt be the father of many nations; neither shall thy name be any more called ABRAM *(exalted father)*, but thy name shall be ABRAHAM *(father of a multitude)*; for the father of many nations have I made thee,' *i. e.* appointed thee to be. Hence it is perfectly clear, not only that the name was itself significant, but that it was given in connexion with the promise, that it was a symbol of it, and a summary anticipation of it. It must often raise delightful expectations in the heart of his faithful descendants.* To speak of his becoming *Abraham*, was, therefore, the same thing, (to those in whose native language the name was significant, and to whom his history was familiar), as to speak of the fulfilment of the divine promise, that he should be the father of many nations, that in his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed.†

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* Mr. Belsham, in his *Calm Inquiry* (p. 54, 2d Ed.), says that "the word Abraham always in the New Testament occurs as a proper name, and never in a mystical sense." So does the word *Peter*, after Christ gave Simon that name, except in the instance in which our Lord employs it according to that signification on account of which he gave it; and this, by the way, is not a mystical sense. It deserves consideration, too, that our Lord himself, in this very conference with the Jews, founds his censure on what is sometimes termed a mystical interpretation. He says, *v.* 37, that he knows they were Abraham's descendants; but in *v.* 39, he virtually declares that they were *not* his descendants; meaning that they were not among his spiritual children,—those, of whom, in countless multitudes, he would be the father.

† We can more easily feel the force of significant names where they are unusual. The name of *Wellbeloved* is familiar to many

Once more, it is obvious that this promise could only be fulfilled in proportion as Jesus was acknowledged as the Messiah, and received with the faith of the heart. If therefore our Lord virtually declares, that before the great ancestor of the Jews could become the father of many nations, and the promise of God to him be fulfilled, his own divine authority must be admitted, as the person in whom all the families of the earth were to be blessed, there is nothing but what is fully borne out by the fact, nothing to perplex the understanding or to oppose the general tenor of Scripture doctrine. And this I think our Lord does declare in the words in question, 'Before he shall become Abraham, I am *he*.'* This is a perfectly literal rendering;

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of my readers, but is an uncommon one. It must have had its origin in the amiable qualities of the person who first received it. If I say, he who now bears it *is* Well-beloved, I am perfectly and at once intelligible to every Englishman, though to a foreigner, viewing the appellation merely as a *name*, it might require explanation.

* I was accustomed to regard the ellipsis as *after* γενεσθαι: rendering it 'before Abraham shall become *so*,' that is become the father of many nations. This caused considerable difficulty in the construction; and in an Appendix which was subjoined to some copies of the first edition of *Proof from Scripture*, (and designed as a reply to Mr. Veysie's strictures in his *Vindication*,) I gave the literal rendering I have now given 'before he shall be Abraham,' πριν Αβρααμ γενεσθαι. The order is obviously the same as in ὑγιης γενεσθαι, μαθηται γενεσθαι, &c.

Since the *present* in the Hebrew is expressed by the *future* tense of the verb, it is not surprising that the present in the Greek Scriptures acquires an emphatic force, and implies (as Mr. Wakefield observes) "determination and certainty." We feel it in our Lord's words in *Matt.* xxii. 30, 'they are (εισι) as the angels of God in heaven;' and so in the rest of the verse.—If our Lord used a verb, as in the Greek of St. John, it must be capable of the future sense; and if, as Dr. Pye Smith supposes, (see p. 273,) he did not, still the verb must be supplied.—Hence I consider 'I am' as equivalent to

accordant in every particular with the usage of the words, singly and in construction; and in import equally true and (at that period at least) most momentous. I cannot discern what there is in it that is "trivial and unworthy of our Lord's character." On again carefully reviewing the subject, as I have repeatedly done, I can perceive no solid objection to this interpretation; nor indeed any, except that is not commonly received; but I think it eventually must be.

But it is said that it does not suit the connexion.—Our Lord had said, 'Your father Abraham earnestly desired to see my day; and he saw *it*, (see p. 282,) and was glad.' His words were certainly capable of two meanings; and the Jews took that which best served to confirm their absurd insinuations that he spoke not the words of truth and sobersness, and to cast contempt upon him. But they went further, and perverted them to a meaning which they could not bear. 'Thou art not yet fifty years old,' said his enemies, eager to censure, 'and hast thou seen Abraham?' Our Lord takes no notice of their interruption. Nothing but wilful blindness could so far misunderstand and pervert; and not unfrequently he left wilful blindness to grope after its own phantoms. He had just intimated that the Patriarch rejoiced at the

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'I must be;' and as our Lord had just declared himself (*v.* 12) to be the Light of the world, this appellation may be well supplied here: 'I must be the Light of the world,' is equivalent to 'I must be acknowledged as the Messiah.'

prospect of the time when, through some highly favoured descendant, he should be ennobled by the full accomplishment of the divine promise, and all nations should be blessed in him; without replying to their triumphant sarcasm, except perhaps by adding to the earnestness of his declaration, our Lord continues, 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before he shall become the father of many nations, I am *he*,'—I must be received as the person in whom all nations shall be blessed,—I must be the Light and Saviour of the world. His words implied superiority to Abraham, for they showed that Abraham's highest dignity depended on him: they did more, they clearly implied his own claims as the appointed messenger of God: and urged on by rage and indignation, now raised to the highest pitch, they took up stones to cast at him; but he concealed himself, and went out of the Temple.*

John xvi. 28. 'I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world; again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.'

I imagine that few lay any stress upon expressions of this class as proofs of the pre-existence; and this text will serve as a sufficient

* This interpretation, in its leading features, was given by Schlichtingius, Enjedinus, and other old Socinians. It was revived and defended in the *Theological Repository*, (vol. iv. p. 348—352), by one who was eminent as a Critic and a Christian, the late Mr. Bretland; and I have derived some of my remarks from his paper. I have dwelt the more upon it, because I believe it the true interpretation, and because it does not accord with the current of opinion among my Unitarian brethren. With that interpretation which prevails among them, I never felt satisfied; in this my mind rests with a decidedly preponderating conviction.

specimen of the whole. The Evangelist informs us (ch. i. 2), that *at the beginning* of our Lord's ministry, he was *with God*, προς τον Θεον, that is, favoured with peculiar manifestations of his presence and communications of his will. (See p. 62, *note.*) When he came into the world to execute the purposes of his mission, he came forth from God. When he had finished his mission, and no longer appeared among mankind, he went again to God, and again enjoyed peculiar intercourse with HIM, peculiar marks of HIS approbation. The language of ch. xvii. 18, 'As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world,' is too decisive to allow the expressions, *coming from God, coming into the world, being sent into the world*, &c., to have any connexion with a pre-existent state; and if we take ch. xviii. 37, in its plain and obvious meaning, we have additional proof that our Lord's coming into the world was *subsequent* to his birth, for he says, 'For this cause was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth.'*

John xvii. 5. 'And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thyself, παρα σεαυτῳ, with the glory which I had, with thee, before the world was,' ᾗ ειχον προ του τον κοσμον ειναι παρα σοι.—*The order in the original is*, 'which I had before the world was, with thee.'

In examining this passage, it should be borne in

* See two valuable papers on this class of expressions, in the *Monthly Repository* for 1810, p. 9, and 186.

mind that the question is not, whether it will *allow* of the usual interpretation, but whether it *require* it; for if it do not, it can be no *proof* whatever of a doctrine which, to say the least, is not consistent with the general tenor of the gospel history. I admit that it will *allow* of the common interpretation; but, independently of all doctrinal conclusions, I can by no means regard it as the most probable one. Even if I saw reason to receive the doctrine of the Pre-existence, I must interpret this passage as referring to glory not then *actually* possessed, but simply HAD '*with the* LORD,' in HIS *purposes*. And in this I should be influenced by the following considerations.

(1) The marked variation between *with* THYSELF and *with* THEE, much better suits the reference of the latter to the *purposes* of God, if the former, as usually interpreted, (and as I now think most probable,) refer to that state where God peculiarly manifests his presence, and where all is light and blessedness.* 'I have glorified

* Not sufficiently observing the probable reference of παρα σεαυτῳ (*with thyself*) in *v.* 5, to επι της γης (*on the earth*) in the 4th, I formerly thought that παρα σεαυτῳ meant, *by thy own power;* in which I considered myself borne out by the use of παρα *with a dative* in *Matt.* xix. 26. *Mark* x. 27. *Luke* i. 37. xviii. 27.: but in all these instances, *with* in the sense of *in respect to*, fully answers the purpose; and the other meaning, (which appears rather to rest with the connected words,) is not, to say the least, a usual one: indeed I know no other authority than the passages I have just cited. It is the fact, that there is no other instance where παρα *with a dative*, when used in reference to *God*, clearly denotes *peculiar intercourse* or *presence* with him; and that in those instances where St. John expresses this meaning, he uses προς, even when there is no verb of motion, which might affect the use of the preposition: see ch. i. 1, 2. xvi. 5, 10, 16, &c. 1 *John* i. 2. ii. 1.—As, how-

thee, (our Saviour says, *v.* 4), ON THE EARTH; I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do: and now, O Father, glorify thou me WITH THYSELF, with the glory which I had before the world was, WITH THEE.' The difference of expression is so marked, that surely, I should say, there must be some difference of meaning.—But,

(2) To suppose our Saviour to pray for restoration to personal glory actually possessed for thousands of years, or even of *ages*, before the short suspension of it which had occurred since his human birth, is to my mind quite inconsistent with the earnest solemnity of the supplication; as well as with the exalted and comprehensive disinterestedness of his character. If we are satisfied without travelling out of the scripture records, we may venture to assert, that the glory which he had *on earth*,—of executing, through disgrace and suffering, the purposes of his heavenly Father, and of *commencing* the work of mercy,—would be greater, in his estimation, than any *personal* glory actually possessed before: and what, before possessed, could be comparable with that to which he was exalted for his obedience unto death,—that glory which before he could not have possessed,—the glory

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ever, the use of παρα with the dative, denoting *presence with* (with different shades of meaning), is, in other cases, not uncommon, and there is nothing to prevent this use of it in reference to God, I prefer interpreting παρα σεαυτῳ as is usually done, *in* THY OWN *immediate presence.*

of being the Author of an eternal salvation to countless myriads; of leading on to glory the children of God, surpassing in number what it would require ages even to enumerate; of giving light to the world which should be increasing, in its extent and in its influence, till every rational inhabitant of it should enjoy its sanctifying and bliss-giving radiance; of creating mankind anew to righteousness and true holiness; of ruling, for the noblest purposes, in a kingdom which shall continue till sin and death shall be no more;—in short, of being the Guide, the Saviour, and the Judge of the world.

(3) If then παρα σοι, *with thee*, can be referred to the *view* or *purposes* of God,—in other words, if the clause *can*, consistently with scriptural usage, be so interpreted as to refer to glory which had not been actually possessed,—the variation of the expression, and especially the infinitely superior nature of our Lord's glory *after* his work on earth, must surely lead to this reference.

Now, so far from there being any difficulty in such an interpretation of *with thee*, it is by far the most accordant with the scriptural use of παρα with a dative *when referring to* GOD: it then almost uniformly denotes *in the sight* or *view*, *estimation* or *purpose of*, or, *in respect to*.* In

* If it should be thought that as παρα is used in both cases, the signification must be the same, I answer that the Greek preposition necessarily varies its force according to the connexion, as our own does in this very passage; 'glorify thou me WITH thyself, with

the following instances it has this force; and in all the passages, except those marked with an asterisk, it is used in reference to God: *Matt.* vi. 1. xix. 26. *Mark* x. 27. *Luke* i. 30, 37. ii. 52. xviii. 27. *John* viii. 38.† **Acts* xxvi. 8. *Rom.* ii. 11, 13. ix. 14. *xi. 25. *xii. 16. 1 *Cor.* iii. 19. vii. 24. *2 *Cor.* i. 17. *Gal.* iii. 11. *Eph.* vi. 9. 2 *Thess.* i. 6. *James* i. 17, *27. 1 *Peter* ii. 4, 20. 2 *Peter* iii. 8.

Two of the passages in which παρα is thus employed are remarkable, *viz.* 2 *Pet.* iii. 8. 'One day is with the Lord,' παρα κυριῳ, in his purposes and estimation, 'as a thousand years;' and, *Matt.* vi. 1. 'Otherwise ye have no reward with your Father who is in heaven,' εχετε παρα τῳ πατρι, where the same verb and the same preposition are employed. This declaration of our Lord's plainly implies, that if his disciples make the approbation of God, and not that of men, the motive of their conduct, they HAVE *a reward* WITH *their Father who is in* heaven; not, surely, that they would be in *actual* possession of it, but that they would possess it in HIS *purposes*, to whom the past, present, and future are at once alike present, to whom a thousand years are as one day, to whose all-comprehensive

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the glory,' &c. Would any one suppose that the force of the two *withs* is the same, because they are thus used together?

† This is the only instance, besides the passage in question, in which there is any reason to suppose that the preposition, referring to God, denotes HIS *more immediate presence in heaven:* but the words, (without referring to the diversity of reading in the last clause,) may signify, 'what I perceive to be according to the purposes of my Father:' comp. *Rom.* ix. 14. 2 *Cor.* i. 17.

mind the dead are as though they were living, 'for *they all live to* HIM.' *Luke* xx. 38.

Agreeably to this mode of expression, the Apostle Paul, *Rom.* viii. 30, speaks of believers as being NOW glorified, because God has determined that they shall HEREAFTER be glorified; and in 2 *Tim.* i. 9, he employs language which one would suppose would completely prevent the scriptural critic from urging against the Unitarian, that his interpretation is forced and unnatural, when he refers our Lord's words to glory which he possessed, not actually, but in the divine purpose—'Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose, and the grace which WAS BESTOWED UPON US IN CHRIST JESUS, BEFORE THE ANCIENT DISPENSATIONS.'* I must say that, in my judgment, if the words of our Lord imply that *he* himself *existed*, in a state of glory, before the world was, the words of Paul equally imply that *all Christians* existed, in a state of grace or favour, before the ancient dispensations. On the other hand, if it be allowed that the grace given to the disciples of Christ, before the ancient dispensations, was given, not actually, but in the divine purpose, the inference at once follows that the text in question does not imply that the glory which Jesus had before the foundation of the world *with God*, was actually possessed by

* See Improved Version on *John* xvii. 5. *Rom.* viii. 30.

him, but was *his* in the purpose of HIM whose counsels are unchangeable, and who will do all HIS pleasure.

From these considerations I regard the following interpretation of this passage, as more accordant with the phraseology of the New Testament, than that which renders it an argument in favour of the pre-existent scheme,—'And now, O Father, glorify thou me, with thyself, with the glory which I had, in thy view, before the world was.' Whether this or the common interpretation best suits the general tenor of the New Testament, I feel no doubt; and it appears to me that it also best suits the connexion: in reference to which I must add the following observations.

(1) The disinterested benevolence of our Lord's character, and the view which it is obvious he had of the vast importance of his dispensation, render it highly probable that the glory for which he prayed, was that arising from the extensive and effectual reception of the blessings which he brought from God;* and if

* I see no objection to this supposition except what arises from v. 24; but I think that this may be justly paraphrased as follows: 'It is my earnest desire that where I am, wherever I may have to exercise those powers which thou wilt give me to promote the spread of the Gospel, there my followers may be workers together with me, that they may witness my triumph over the opposition of sin and ignorance, and thus see and share in the glory which thou hast given me.'—I lay, however, little stress upon this reference of the glory spoken of to the diffusion of the gospel blessings, in a doctrinal point of view; but it seems to me most accordant with the nature of the Christian dispensation, and with the known excellence of our Lord's character.

this be allowed, (and it is surely the most honourable to our Lord,) he had not actually possessed that glory, though he had it, in the divine purposes, before the world was, (see p. 291). (2) Every instance of the spread of Christian principles increased that glory; and every one shared in it, who contributed to effect their diffusion; which explains *v.* 10, 22, better than the supposition that our Lord prays for such glory as he is considered as having actually possessed before his human birth. (3) Our Lord explicitly says, that HE HAD GIVEN his disciples the glory which God had given him: now if he had given it them, THEY HAD IT; yet, of whatever nature it was, they were not in actual possession of it: and this further shows, that our Lord, in *v.* 5, refers to glory never actually possessed, but given him in the unalterable decrees of God.

My own conviction respecting this passage is, that the interpretation above given, is the most accordant with the phraseology and general tenor of the Scriptures, and with the connexion; and that, therefore, so far from proving the doctrine of pre-existence, this text affords no support to it whatever.

John iii. 13. 'And no one hath gone up into heaven, but he who came down from heaven, *even* the Son of Man, who is in heaven.'*—*v.* 31. 'He that cometh from above, is above all; he that is from the earth, is from the earth, and speaketh from the

* The words 'who is in heaven,' are marked by Griesbach as of somewhat doubtful authority.

earth: he who cometh from heaven [is above all, and] testifieth what he hath seen and heard.'—vi. 33. 'For the bread of God is that which cometh down from heaven and giveth life to the world.—*v.* 35. 'I am the bread of life.'—*v.* 38. 'I came down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of Him who sent me.'—*v.* 41, 42. 'The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven; and said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we knew? how then doth he say, I came down from heaven?'—*v.* 50, 51. 'This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat of it, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven.'—*v.* 62, 'If then ye should perceive the Son of Man going up where he was before.'

These are all the passages in which our Lord is spoken of as having come down from heaven; and it only remains to be considered, whether they are inconsistent with the opinion that he was a man in the usual signification of the term, having no actual existence before his human birth. Now these passages either imply that he was once in a place or state called *heaven*, (which, whatever be its modifications, may be called the literal meaning); or, they must be understood figuratively, as implying no more than that his doctrines and mission originated in the immediate interposition of God.

In favour of the *figurative* meaning of these expressions, it may be urged, (1) That the phrase, *to go up into heaven*, ch. iii. 13, probably signifies, as some eminent orthodox interpreters allow, to search into and to understand the counsels of God; and that therefore, to *come down from heaven*, may signify, to bring and discover divine truths to the world, under a

divine commission. (2) That thoughout ch. vi. (except in *v.* 38), when our Saviour speaks of himself as *coming down from heaven*, it is under the figurative appellation of *bread*, or *the bread of life*, which, he says *(v.* 51*)*, is *his flesh;* and he afterwards tells the Jews *(v.* 53*)* that unless they ate his flesh and drank his blood, they had no life in them. Now there can scarcely be a doubt, that by this last expression Jesus meant, unless they cordially imbibed his principles and complied with his requirements; and therefore by his *flesh*, or the *bread* which came down from heaven, he must have meant the doctrines which he received from God.

The last passage above cited, ch. vi. 62, constitutes the chief objection against this interpretation; but as the expression 'going up where he was before,' almost certainly means, 'going up into heaven,' it may signify, displaying a still more intimate acquaintance with the purposes of God, and revealing truths which would be still more remote from the apprehension of his hearers, and offensive to their prejudices.—This explanation is countenanced by ch. iii. 12, (where our Lord says to Nicodemus, 'If I have told you earthly things,' things which should have been plain and intelligible to a teacher in Israel, 'and ye believe not, how will ye believe if I tell you heavenly things?' things more remote from common apprehension and opposite to Jewish prejudices); and also by an apparent want of connexion, if the passage be interpreted literally,

as referring to the real ascent of our Saviour after his resurrection.*

Interpreting the phraseology of the above-mentioned passages literally, the advocates for the *pre-existence* say, that it means that Jesus existed before his human birth, in a state or place called heaven, and that he came down from heaven when he became united with a human frame so as to constitute him in some sense a man. This hypothesis assigns an apparently literal meaning to every passage except the first clause of ch. iii. 13, (*viz.* 'No man hath gone up into heaven, but he who came down from heaven,') where it must suppose some

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figurative meaning, and consequently loses much of its value. But the radical defect of this interpretation is, that it is founded upon a supposition which is not proved, and I venture to say cannot be proved from any part of the Scriptures, *viz.* that Jesus was in heaven before his human birth: and an insurmountable objection to it is, that it is not consistent with the plain and obvious declaration of our Lord, the general tenor of the Gospels, and the express declarations and reasonings of the Apostles, all which justify the belief that, as to *nature*, Jesus was in the strict and proper sense a human being, in all respects like his brethren. Besides this objection, one which strikes me forcibly, arises from the phraseology itself. It was the Son of *Man* who came down from heaven; it was the Son of *Man* who was to ascend up where he was before; and our Lord says, I *(the person speaking)* came down from heaven. Was Jesus the son of *man* before he was born? before he came down from heaven? Was the being compounded of a pre-existent spirit, and a human system of feelings and affections, (to say nothing of the body, though that also would surely be included, in common apprehension, under the term *I*), was this being in heaven before he came into the world? Surely not upon the pre-existent hypothesis; and if not, the supposed advantage of this interpretation derived from its being literal, vanishes at once, and the advocate for the hypothesis is involved in all the mystery of a

two-fold nature in the Man Christ Jesus. I earnestly wish, that those who maintain this doctrine would completely pursue all the difficulties into which it leads,* and then consider how slight the evidence in favour of it to counterbalance them. It is not easy to loosen the hold of long-imbibed opinions; but I cannot avoid thinking, that such a plan of investigation would soon make these, our fellow Unitarians, altogether such as we are on this leading point.

The literal meaning then of the phraseology in question, taken in its connexion, is, not that Jesus *before* he was man was in heaven, and *at his birth* came down from heaven, but that the person who then spoke to the Jews, the *Son of Man*, the *Man* Christ Jesus, came down from heaven; and if we adopt a literal interpretation, we must further admit that at some period, previous to his conversation with Nicodemus, he actually was in heaven. As every thoughtful reader of the Scriptures must know, the word *heaven* greatly varies in its signification: sometimes it denotes the *atmosphere*, in which the clouds and mists are suspended, or the *firmament* in which the sun and stars appear to be fixed, or both together, the whole space surrounding our earth as far as the imagination can reach; sometimes it denotes a place permanently

* Some of these difficulties are stated in the paper referred to at the end of the last note.

favoured with peculiar manifestations of the divine presence, the residence of superior and happy intelligences, or such a state without explicit or even implied reference to place; and sometimes again it denotes God himself. It has several other meanings, chiefly of a figurative kind, but the above include the principal of those which are literal. It is I think clear, that our Lord's being *in heaven* must refer to the period when, according to the Evangelist, he was *with God*, *viz.* at the beginning of his Ministry; and we are, therefore, led to one of two suppositions, either that Jesus was carried up from this earth into a place called heaven, (in like manner as Paul, 2 *Cor.* xii. 1—4, was, really or in imagination, taken up to the third heaven, to paradise;) or, that he was in heaven while in his mountainous abode in the Desert, inasmuch as he was then *with God*, favoured with peculiar intercourse with him, peculiar manifestations of his presence, and peculiar intimations of his will. To the devout, the ardent, and susceptible mind of Jesus, to be so *with God*, must be *heaven* itself.—The former supposition best suits the phraseology in ch. vi. 62, because it best refers to *place* rather than *state;* but it is not countenanced by any thing which is recorded respecting the period of discipline and instruction which succeeded our Lord's baptism: the latter sufficiently well accords with that verse, if we allow that *heaven* may denote the *state* without reference to a specific *place;* and it is fully sanctioned

by the fact, that at the period above mentioned Jesus was *with God.**

I would now appeal to the judgment of any candid person, whether phraseology, which, when taken completely literally, is in fact inconsistent with the doctrine of pre-existence, and which admits of a completely literal meaning entirely independent of it, and involving no supposition in any degree so improbable as the incarnation of a pre-existent spirit, or in any degree inconsistent with the general tenor of the Scriptures, can be any proof of that doctrine. Though I regard the old Socinian opinion, that Jesus was actually removed from the earth to a place called heaven, as rendered improbable by the silence of the Evangelists, and by its being unnecessary to explain our Lord's words, yet it appears to me to have, in every respect, the advantage over the pre-existent scheme; it is perfectly accordant with the strictly literal

* It is to be observed, that our Lord uses the phraseology in question *only on two occasions:* his conference with Nicodemus, soon after the beginning of his ministry; and his conversation in the synagogue at Capernaum, probably a short time before his crucifixion. The Evangelist once uses somewhat corresponding phraseology in his remarks on the declaration of the Baptist, ch. iii. 31. Is it conceivable that they should have meant what is generally understood, and yet never speak of the supposed fact in plain unambiguous language, and so seldom even employ language founded upon it?—Now, when it is recollected, (1) that, in both the cases referred to, our Lord's language was highly figurative, and apparently intentionally so; (2) that he often speaks of God, as *in heaven;* and (3) that in several instances he uses the word *heaven* to denote *God* himself,—it may not appear in any way unnatural, unaccordant with his own phraseology, (and certainly it was not with that of the Jews in general,) to speak of himself as having been *in heaven* at that most important period when he was *with God.*

meaning of our Lord's words, and with the general tenor of the New Testament as to the person of Christ; and it is not in opposition to any recorded fact:—and if no other explanation presented itself, I could not therefore hesitate for a moment to which to give a decided preference. But my own conviction is, that Jesus was properly speaking *in heaven* when he was *with God;* that, therefore, he *went up into heaven* when his peculiar intercourse with God began; that he *came down from heaven* when he *came forth from God* to discharge the great work which his Father, who is in heaven, had given him to do;—and if it be objected, that the expressions employed suppose local motion, I reply, that it is decidedly probable, that the spot where Jesus was with God was one of those very high rocky elevations with which the Desert abounds; but that, if Jesus considered himself as in heaven at the time he was with God, even though he referred only to *state*, he would naturally employ, when speaking of that state, expressions which were commonly used in connexion with the word *heaven*.

I have been more particular in considering this phraseology, because I apprehend that it is what furnishes, among those at least who are satisfied with what is called the plain and obvious sense of Scripture, the chief support of the doctrine of pre-existence; and yet in reality, when accurately examined, it affords no independent proof of it, and would scarcely suit it if proved.

Difficulties, it is admitted, attend the other explanations; but as far as the phraseology itself is concerned, they are not greater than what attends the common interpretation; and, in point of consistency with the Scriptures, the others have the most striking superiority. The figurative meaning, and that which on the authority of the Evangelist I adopt, so much coincide with each other, that some may regard them as in reality the same; they have, however, a different foundation, and lead to somewhat different interpretations.* In one respect they fully

* It may be desirable to mention what I regard as the just explanation of the respective passages, founded upon the above reference to the time when Jesus was *with God.—John* iii. 13. 'And no one hath been favoured with peculiar intercourse with God and acquaintance with HIS will, except him who came forth from God to declare HIS purposes to mankind, that is, the Son of Man, who still enjoys direct intercourse with God, and continual manifestations of HIS powerful approbation.' If the last clause be genuine, it may be considered as corresponding to ch. i. 51. 'Ye shall see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man.' If it be said, that on this interpretation the first clause is not true, for that Moses also was *with the Lord;* I reply, the same difficulty rests on the other schemes: Elijah ascended to heaven, and Moses was made completely acquainted with the purposes of God as they respected the Jews.

Ib. iii. 31. 'Jesus spoke (*v.* 3.) of the necessity of being born from above, *ανωθεν*, denoting the spiritual and heavenly nature of that change which must be undergone by his disciples. The Evangelist uses the same adverb here, and appears to mean, 'He who comes from God, invested with authority from God, is superior to all; he who is not from God, manifests the origin of his teaching, and his words have not their requisite authority; he whose authority is divine, who comes from God, [is superior to all, and] testifieth what he hath seen and heard in his communications with God.'

Ib. vi. 38. 'I came forth from peculiar intercourse with God, not to do my own will, but the will of Him who sent me.'

Ib. vi. 62. 'Do ye revolt at this? if then ye should see the Son of Man ascending to Him with whom he was before, to the total extinction of all your hopes that the Christ would be a temporal prince? Yet though what I have said displeases you, you might

agree, they are each perfectly consistent with fact, and with the general tenor of the New Testament; and the only point which gives my mind decision between them is, that that which appears to me to be a literal meaning, best accords with, and is best borne out by, the phraseology of the Scriptures.

As I have already, in p. 83, considered the expression, *root of Jesse* or *David*, which occurs in *Rom.* xv. 12. *Rev.* v. 5. xxii. 16, and in p. 176, &c. the appellation *beginning* (αρχη) or *chief of the creation of God*, which occurs in *Rev.* iii. 14, (which, however, does not best class with the evidence for the doctrine of *simple* pre-existence,) I have only one other expression to consider, *viz.*

1 *John* iv. 2. 'Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ came in the flesh, εν σαρκι, is of God.'

In *v.* 3. the words 'Christ hath come in the flesh,' are omitted by Griesbach. The expression occurs again in 2 *John* 7. It will scarcely admit of any explanation except in reference to the opinion of some early heretics, that the Christ was a man in appearance only, and suffered only in appearance. In opposition to this, the Apostle maintains that he who came from God was (as

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easily have known that the principles which I inoulcate, and which you must receive, are that which gives life; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words which I speak to you are spirit and are life.'

John vi. 33, &c., in which our Saviour speaks of himself as the bread of life, appear so clearly to refer to his doctrine, (see p. 298,) which we all allow was from heaven, that is, from God, that, whatever be the meaning of the other passages, this figurative meaning is here decidedly preferable.

he asserted at the beginning of his Gospel) really a human being, subject to sufferings and to death; and in ch. v. lays great stress upon his having really died, without doubt regarding a conviction of the reality of his death, as of the very greatest consequence, in order to give its due influence to the all-important fact that he rose again. 'To walk in the flesh,' εν σαρκι, (2 *Cor.* x. 3,) means to be subject to the frailties and sufferings of humanity; 'to live in the flesh,' εν σαρκι, (*Gal.* ii. 20. *Phil.* i. 22,) has a similar meaning; and I cannot see why the expression 'come in the flesh,' should be supposed to refer to the possession of a nature different from that of man. All, however, must admit that the reference is too obscure to justify the belief of so extraordinary a fact, without evidence of which we have seen it destitute.—If the Apostles, or if our Lord himself, had meant to teach a doctrine which most Christians, as they imagine, derive from their words, (*viz.* that he existed before his birth in a state of glory and happiness,) what is more probable than that we should somewhere or other have found the fact, not *referred* to merely, but stated *plainly* and *explicitly*, in some such way as we ourselves should express it,—for instance by saying, 'Our Lord Jesus Christ before he was born in this world lived in heaven, and to save men he came down from heaven, became united with a human frame, was born and grew up as men do, lived, suffered, and died as a man, and at last was received back again into that state of

glory and happiness in which he had before lived, and which he relinquished for the good of mankind.' In fact, however, this doctrine is no where taught; and the passages which are adduced to support it, fully accord with the belief that *Jesus was, as he himself declared, a* MAN *who communicated to the world the truths which he had heard from* GOD. On this plain, unambiguous, decisive declaration, I therefore rest my faith with full conviction.

Some appear to think, that, in order to establish the proper or simple humanity of our Lord, we must be able to *show* that every passage in the New Testament is fully consistent with it; and that if this be not done, the doctrine of a superior nature must be admitted. It is much to be wished that they would adopt the same test, in reference to their own opinions, with nearly the same strictness which they expect from us; but I must remark, that though this uniform consistency of the genuine writings of the Apostles with what we regard as Christian truth, may reasonably be expected, and will, at some future period, appear to every candid inquirer, yet it is too much to expect that it should at once appear. Who doubts the doctrine of gravitation because we are not yet able to perceive how it explains every irregularity in the tides? It explains, and no other system can explain, the leading fundamental phenomena; and no one doubts, that at some future period, and when a more accurate

acquaintance is obtained with the peculiar circumstances under which the apparent irregularities occur, that they also will be found to be perfectly consistent with the Newtonian system, and to receive from it an adequate explanation. I consider the Unitarian doctrine—that 'there is ONE GOD, and one Mediator between God and men, the MAN Christ Jesus'—as standing in the same situation. It is founded upon, and alone explains, the leading facts and declarations of the Scriptures. Some expressions may scarcely appear consistent with it, and, *taken alone*, might admit of a better explanation upon some other system; but this other system is inconsistent with those leading facts and declarations, and cannot therefore be admitted. Now it is found that as our acquaintance extends with the phraseology of the Scriptures, and with the circumstances of the age and countries where they were written, those apparent difficulties diminish; and though we may not yet be able to give an adequate explanation of every one of those expressions agreeably to our views of Christian truth, we confidently expect that such explanations will be discovered, and that every part will be perceived to harmonize with what we deem ourselves authorized in regarding as the doctrines of the Gospel. With this conviction the Unitarian may consider himself as justified in resting, without attempting to explain every expression which does not appear to accord with his system; and if he take a higher ground, as I have done in the foregoing

pages, and show in what light he himself regards such passages, he still must wish to rest the convictions of others upon the leading facts and declarations, in short, upon the general tenor of the Scriptures.

It is my own conviction, not only that Unitarianism, and Unitarianism alone, is accordant with the general tenor of the New Testament, but that every expression in the New Testament admits of a just interpretation consistent with it; and that, therefore, Unitarianism is the doctrine of the Gospel: but if, as is probable, some of the foregoing interpretations should, after comparing Scripture with Scripture, appear to some of my Readers to be inadmissible, I entreat them to bear in mind, that Unitarianism depends not upon them for its foundation. That rests principally upon various plain and positive declarations of Scripture, which, as it appears to us, no controversial skill can show to be consistent with any other opinion, than that the FATHER is the ONLY TRUE GOD, and that JESUS, the SON OF GOD, *was truly and properly a* MAN, *and therefore, as to nature, in all respects like his brethren.*

I have already stated at some length those expressions and the arguments from them, which I at present consider as of most weight in the controversy, (see Chap. II. III.); but, as in the present chapter I have been concerned with an opinion whose advocates would in general agree

with me in those arguments, and yet are kept from admitting the doctrine of the proper or simple humanity of Christ, by a very small number of expressions which they regard as inconsistent with it, I shall here briefly adduce in a connected form those considerations which oppose *their* conclusions; and then leave the reader to decide which system has the most difficulties to contend with.

1. The Prophets speak of the Messiah as a MAN. Moses (in a prophecy which Peter, after the ascension and the effusion of the holy spirit, expressly applies to Christ,) says, 'A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your BRETHREN LIKE UNTO ME.' Isaiah speaks of him as 'a MAN of sorrows and acquainted with grief.' And the Baptist, while he acknowledged his superior dignity, spake of him as a MAN.

2. "The Jews expected that the Messiah would be a MAN."*

3. The Gospels, throughout, represent Jesus as a MAN acting under a most honourable and important commission. They represent him as feeling the *affections* and *wants* of a MAN, as universally *regarded* and *treated* as a MAN, (by his enemies, by the people at large, and by his friends,) as experiencing the *sufferings* of a MAN, and at last *dying* as a MAN.

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* "It is plain from this passage, (*Matt.* xxii. 45), that the Jews expected that the Messiah would be a man: for had they conceived of him to be God, equal with the Father, or some super-angelic being, they would have found no difficulty in answering our Saviour's question." See Note in Mr. Kenrick's Exposition, Vol. i. p. 450.

4. Of the eight Apostles and Evangelists whose writings are contained in the New Testament, five (*viz.* Matthew, Mark, Luke, James, and Jude,) have said nothing which presents *any* difficulty against the opinion, that Jesus was as to nature simply a man; though Matthew, Mark, and Luke, have given an account of his ministry, and Luke, of the first preachings of the Apostles.

5. Though, if Jesus were a great pre-existent being, the fact could be known only by express revelation, and the whole importance of the fact must depend upon its being known, yet we no where meet with any express declaration of it: on the contrary, the language of Paul and John, though it might in some few instances admit of a convenient interpretation in reference to the supposed fact, does also in those instances justly admit of an interpretation perfectly consistent with their own plain and decided expressions on other occasions.

6. On various occasions where there was a suitable opportunity for the declaration of the doctrine of pre-existence, either by Jesus himself or by his Apostles, we meet with nothing of the kind; but, on the contrary, we find the most complete silence as to a superior nature, where our Lord spoke of his own claims, and where the Apostles were replying to his inquiries, whom they thought him to be.

7. Not only do the New Testament writers record several instances in which our Lord was called MAN by others, without any intimation

that they were mistaken, but they do also themselves in many instances call him MAN in the most unqualified manner, without guard or comment. For instance, immediately after the effusion of the spirit, Peter speaks of him as a MAN FROM GOD. Paul speaks of the MAN Christ Jesus, as the mediator between God and men: he declares, that the gift by grace is by one MAN Christ Jesus; that the resurrection of the dead cometh by one MAN; and that God will judge the world in righteousness by that MAN whom he hath appointed. And the Apostle John, after having described the high dignity and exalted agency of his glorified Master as the Word of God, expressly says, 'and the Word was FLESH,' *i.e.* a *human being, mortal, and subject to infirmities and sufferings.*

8. The Apostle Paul, and the Writer to the Hebrews, *reason* from our Lord's being MAN; and in 1 *Cor.* xv. the Apostle's reasonings are entirely founded upon his being as to nature in *all things* like his brethren, and they have force upon that supposition only.

9. The language of our Saviour himself leads to the same conclusion. He frequently uses the appellation *Son of Man*, in reference to himself; and though this may be regarded as of doubtful import, there is one most memorable occasion, on which he varies his mode of expression in such a manner as to show, that he was appointed to judge mankind *because* he was a PROPER HUMAN BEING, 'in all respects like his brethren.'

And whatever may be objected against this inference, there is one unambiguous declaration in which he explicitly, and without any reserve, speaks of himself as a MAN.

This doctrine renders the Scriptures perfectly consistent with themselves: it makes all plain, and removes some of the greatest difficulties attending revelation: it gives full force to the example of Jesus, and to the merit of his sufferings, and consequently to his claims upon our love and gratitude: and it also gives full force to the pledge which his resurrection affords, that we too shall be raised from the dead.

It is an important consideration, that in reference to all the objects of his high office, Jesus is represented as man; and I do not see how any who abide by scripture declarations, can regard it as necessary, or even expedient, to enable him to fulfil any of those objects, that he should, as to nature, have been more than man. As MAN he was the *Mediator* between God and man: as MAN he declared the truths which he heard from God: by him as MAN we receive the gracious gift, the promise of pardon and everlasting life: by him as MAN cometh the resurrection from the dead: as MAN he was authorized to execute judgment: and as MAN he will come, under the appointment of his God and Father, to raise the dead and judge the world,

And I would entreat the reader to consider, whether this doctrine can reasonably lessen our reverence for this well-beloved Son of God. It

is my feeling, that were I at this moment to be convinced that Jesus was as to nature higher than the highest archangels, it would not in the slightest degree increase that reverence which I feel, and which I wish to feel and to cultivate for him, as the Representative of God, the Revealer of His will, the Agent of His great purposes of love and mercy, and, under His direction and authority the Judge of all mankind.

PART III.

ON THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF REDEMPTION.

CHAP. VIII.

Consideration of the Scripture Doctrine respecting the Redemption of Man by Jesus Christ.

IF the views which are stated in the foregoing pages are correct, it almost necessarily follows that the ideas too commonly imbibed respecting the ends of the death of Christ cannot be true. In this and the following chapters, however, I shall endeavour briefly to show, that the Scripture Doctrine concerning the Redemption that is in Christ Jesus, is in perfect harmony with the Scripture Doctrine concerning the Person of Christ.

I do not think it necessary to enlarge so much in this Part, as I have done in the Parts preceding. When it is shown that Jesus is not represented in the Scriptures, in any other light than as a MAN FROM GOD, the foundation* is wholly

* "It is a contradiction," says Soott, in his Force of Truth, p. 116, "to believe the *real* and *consequently* INFINITE *satisfac-* "*tion* to divine justice made by the death of Christ, *without be-* "*lieving him to be* VERY GOD OF VERY GOD."

destroyed of those notions respecting the *immediate efficacy* of his death, which tend so much to check the affections of love to God, and to weaken the motives to the practice of Christian duty; and further, a large proportion of those, who, as I imagine, depart from the simplicity that is in Christ, by retaining the doctrine of his pre-existence, do yet fully agree with those who reject that doctrine, in their views as to the groundlessness of all opinions, which suppose the death of Jesus to have made a *proper* satisfaction for the sins of men, and as to the impropriety and danger of employing language, which in its plain and obvious meaning directly implies that supposition. Still, however, it is probable that many find it more easy to say what *were not* the *ends* accomplished by the *death* of Christ, than to form a clear idea what *were:* and (as I have myself, by the investigations whose result is contained in this chapter, acquired ideas which completely satisfy my own mind,) I am willing to hope that the following statements may assist others, in obtaining satisfactory ideas as to the real force and import of the apostolical expressions on the subject, which at the same time shall be perfectly consistent with the views afforded in various parts of the Scriptures, respecting the FREE MERCY of God to the repenting sinner.* This is

* To avoid unnecessary ambiguity, I shall here observe, once for all, that, by *repentance*, I understand sorrow for past sins united with a real change of disposition (and of course of practice) where it has been wrong,—in other words, with amendment of heart and life. The sorrow is *penitence*, and may be unattended with amend-

the difficulty; and though, when we leave ourselves entirely to the teachings of the Scriptures, it is not in itself a great one, yet it is not unfrequently rendered almost insurmountable, by the opinions which may have been long entertained respecting some supposed mysterious efficacy of the death of Christ,—by the unfortunate habit so generally prevalent among the modern orthodox, of viewing passages out of their connexion, and without reference to the general tenor of the Scriptures,—by the strong assertions and unscriptural language of those who hold the doctrine of satisfaction in any of its forms,—and by the representations which are so often made, in and out of the pulpit, as to the necessity of faith in the atoning merits of the Saviour's blood, for a participation of gospel blessings.

In this chapter, I shall first make some remarks respecting the attributes of God, as they respect his dealings towards mankind; and next consider, what light the Scriptures afford us with respect to the means of acceptance with him. I shall then proceed to show, how it is that the death of Jesus was a necessary means in bringing about the redemption of mankind, and to account for the language employed respecting it by the Apostles. In the next chapter I shall consider the import of those expressions which

ment; the latter is the essential part of repentance, and though it is usually preceded by pungent sorrow, it is not necessarily so, and doubtless does not depend upon the vividness of the feelings of penitence for its acceptableness to God. When the word *repentance* is found connected with *forgiveness*, I believe the original is uniformly μετανοια, *a change of mind.*

may seem to oppose these views; and conclude with a few observations on the whole.

I. The Scriptures represent God as essentially *good* and *merciful;* and though they also represent him as *just*, nothing appears, throughout the whole, to countenance the belief that the exercise of his justice in any way limits the exercise of his *benevolence*. In fact, in a *perfect* being, justice can only be a modification of benevolence: we may find it convenient to speak of them as distinct attributes, but this is language founded solely upon the affections of the human mind. Though, however, justice and benevolence, taken in their true extent, equally direct to the same conduct, yet the affections which prompt us to render to every one his due because it is his due, are distinct from those which incline us to do good unto all as we have opportunity; and, when either is imperfect and misguided, they really interfere in their operations. But in the Supreme Being, benevolence cannot be imperfect or misguided, and can have for its *ultimate* object, nothing but the promotion of happiness; and his justice can only be that modification or branch of benevolence, by which the plans of his moral administration are sanctioned by the suitable distribution of rewards or punishments. The divine justice must have precisely the same end in view as the divine mercy; both are equally parts of the benevolence of God, or rather, both are merely names for the benevolence of God as directed, in the one case, to the infliction of pain or the

bestowment of happiness, according as the welfare of his creatures requires; and in the other, to the prevention or removal of the baneful consequences of disobedience. In *this* view we certainly may say with correctness, that divine *mercy* may be *limited* by divine *justice;* but when we use this language, it should carefully be borne in mind, that it is merely saying, in effect, that the benevolence (or goodness) of God may require the infliction or continuance of pain, rather than the prevention or removal of it. In a similar way, using language founded upon human feelings and affections, we may speak of the *anger* of God, and in like manner, of his *placability;* but neither of these expressions can reasonably be supposed to convey adequate ideas of the real attributes of the divine nature; and if we still continue to employ terms which are best calculated for the infancy of the human mind, we should take care to understand them as in no way implying that the goodness of God is limited or changeable. The *anger* of God can only mean, that modification of his goodness which directs to the infliction or continuance of pain; and the *placability* of God, that modification of his goodness which directs to the removal or suspension of pain. If the purposes of the divine government will not allow the exercise of the latter, the goodness of God is not thereby affected or limited; for the anger as well as the placability of God, his justice as well as his mercy, all must have precisely the same object,—the promotion of those ends to which

his infinite wisdom directs, as best adapted to answer the purposes of his infinite goodness.

I trust that these views are sufficiently accordant with all we *now* know of God, and also with that language which the Scriptures employ respecting him; and they bring much more nearly together than at first sight may appear to be the fact, the notions which many entertain of the natural placability of God, and those which others entertain of the justice of God, and of the difficulty of determining, from the usual order of providence, whether, and on what conditions, God forgives sins. I feel and cherish a lively conviction of the unbounded benevolence of God; but I cannot gain, from the usual order of his providence, the conviction that divine benevolence always directs to the removal of the baneful effects of past sins on our sincere repentance for them. On such points as these, we are not to decide by the dictates of human justice or benevolence, however enlightened, (though we must have clear evidence to authorize us to decide against them,) but by what we actually know of the moral government of God. The point is not, whether God is always disposed to promote the best interests of his creatures,—for who *can* doubt this?—but whether, and in what cases, that disposition directs to the removal or diminution of the baneful consequences of sin.

The language of many, however, (and their ideas, if these accord with their language,) respecting the divine justice and mercy, often

represents those attributes as at variance; and by laying an undue stress upon what they consider as the dictates of the justice of God, they limit his benevolence, and speak of him almost as if he were an inexorable tyrant.* Against such notions, every one who believes with the Apostle John, that 'GOD IS LOVE,' should make a stand; and he should himself carefully avoid language which in any way implies them: and against these, and these only it is, that I made the assertion with which I set out. To prove the affirmative part of it, it cannot be necessary to refer to more than the declarations of the Apostle, 1 *John* iv. 7—20, which are all comprised in what I have just now cited, and those of one greater than the Apostle, (*Matt.* v. 44—48,) which represents the benevolence of God as complete and unlimited, extending even to the unthankful and disobedient. And with respect to the negative part, that the justice of God is never represented in the Scriptures as limiting his *benevolence*, I can only say, that I know of no expression in any way countenancing this idea.

* The following will serve to justify this assertion. "God stood "upon FULL SATISFACTION, and WOULD not remit one sin without "it." "From this oblation Christ made of himself to God for our "sins, we infer the INFLEXIBLE nature of divine JUSTICE, which "COULD no other way be diverted from us, and appeased, but by "the blood of Christ." These passages are quoted from Flavel's works in Wright's Anti-satisfactionist, p. 42, 43. *Inexorable*, as every one knows, means, *what cannot be moved by entreaties;* and if any should imagine that Flavel's *inflexible* is not equally strong, let them take Bishop Beveridge's justification of my term. Speaking of Christ he says, "And unless he mediate or intercede for "us, *we may pray our hearts out*, all will signify nothing, God will "neither grant what we desire, nor accept of any thing we do."—Anti-satisfactionist, p. 53. 8vo.

II. We learn from the Scriptures, that the benevolence of God does *not* prevent him from forgiving sins; in other words, from exercising mercy; or, in other words, from hindering or removing those baneful consequences with which, in the usual course of his providence, those sins would be attended. To prove this, numerous passages might be cited; but *Exod.* xxxiv. 6, 7, is sufficient, where God speaks of Himself as, 'The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, FORGIVING INIQUITY AND TRANSGRESSION AND SIN.' Thus far will surely be admitted by all; * and the grand point is, *Can* God, consistently with his justice, or, which is the same thing, with his benevolence, forgive sins, without a satisfaction?

III. The Scriptures of the Old Testament teach us, by recording facts and divine declarations, that it is *not* inconsistent with the justice

* When I had written these words, I recollected that they are contradicted by a passage quoted in the Anti-satisfactionist, p. 50, from Stockell's Redeemer's Glory unveiled, p. 157.—"In a *strict* "and *proper* sense, the infinite God *doth not* forgive sin; for it is "readily granted by all who are sound in the faith, that Jesus Christ "hath given full satisfaction to divine justice for all sin, and hath "fully paid the debts of his church.—And if Christ hath satisfied the "justice of God for all the sins of his people, how then can it justly "or with propriety of speech be said, that God pardoneth our sins "and transgressions? Sure I am, that debt can never be forgiven "which is paid." I suppose Stockell would readily have admitted, consistently with the satisfaction-scheme, that God could not forgive sins without the full satisfaction of Jesus; and if so, he must allow that "in a *strict* and *proper* sense," God cannot forgive sins at all. Unitarianism is not without its *difficulties*, in which, however, it is not peculiar; but, unlike some of the doctrines which it opposes, it involves no *absurdities*.

of God, that is with his benevolence, that he should forgive sins, when the sinner repents of and forsakes them. 'Let the wicked forsake his way,' saith the prophet Isaiah, (ch. lv. 7,) 'and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon: "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," saith the Lord.'—Passages of similar import might be adduced from various parts of the Scriptures, (a reference to some of which will be found below,*) but I think that the foregoing passage is sufficient to satisfy any reasonable person.

If, to destroy the force of the inevitable conclusions which follow from this most important truth, it be maintained, that it was the death of Christ which gave repentance its efficacy, even in the ages preceding that event, I have merely to reply, that nothing of the kind is said or implied in the Scriptures, and much is said which implies the contrary; and that therefore, without inquiring whether or not it *could* be so, I cannot hesitate to affirm that it *was* not so.

IV. Thoughout the whole of the Old Testament, obedience to the divine will is represented as essentially necessary to obtain acceptance with God, and nothing is said which justifies the belief, that any thing additional is requisite

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* *2 Chron.* xxx. 9. *Neh.* ix. 17. *Job* xxxiii. 27, 28. *Ps.* xxxiv. 18. li. 17. cxxx. 4. *Is.* lvii. 15. *Ezek.* xviii. 21, 23, 30, 32. xxxiii. 11, 12. *Zech.* i. 3.

to render that obedience acceptable to him.—Sacrifices indeed were appointed or sanctioned by the Mosaic dispensation; and external rights and ceremonies were enjoined, accommodated to the infancy of the human race, and founded upon the peculiar relation which God was pleased to establish between himself and the Jews; but it is never represented that these institutions had any efficacy in themselves considered, that they could of themselves remove guilt and restore men to the favour of God. They were the appointed means of communication between Jehovah and his people; and the performance of them was valuable, as an act of obedience; but the language of the authorized instructors of the Jews is too explicit to allow of the idea, that they were designed to supersede the grand duties of piety and virtue, to atone for the neglect of them, or to render the discharge of them valuable in the sight of God. 'Thou desirest not sacrifice,' says the Psalmist,* 'else would I give it; thou delightest not in burnt-offering; the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.' And

* *Ps.* li. 16. David clearly declares in this interesting passage, that God had appointed no sacrifices as an atonement for such guilt as he had contracted; that in cases of moral guilt, the only means of regaining the favour of God is genuine contrition, leading to thorough repentance; and that this is acceptable to God. He obviously knew nothing of the necessity of a satisfaction for the sins of men, to enable God to extend his mercy to them: and if God could pardon David without the atonement supposed to be made by the death of Jesus, all arguments in favour of the commonly received doctrine of atonement, derived from the nature of the divine attributes, fall to the ground at once.

alike decisive are the words of the Prophet Micah: after expressing his sense of the nullity of sacrifices to atone for breaches of duty, he says, (ch. vi. 8,) 'He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?'*

V. To the same purpose are the declarations of our Saviour. He represents obedience to the will of God, as what is requisite to obtain his acceptance; and he does not give the slightest intimation, that our obedience is accepted in consequence of any thing which he himself might do or suffer for us,† or that our imperfections are supplied by his perfect obedience. 'Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven.'‡ 'Whosoever shall do the will of my Father who is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.'§

VI. And to the same purpose are the declarations of the Apostles. They represent obedience to the commandments of God as necessary

* See also 1 *Sam.* xv. 22. *Is.* i. 11—15. *Jer.* vi. 20. *Hos.* vi. 6.

† Some may possibly imagine that *John* vi. 53, 54, imply, that eternal happiness is obtained in consequence of believing in the merits of his death;—but the meaning of our Lord's assertion in that passage is plainly no more than this, that unless the Jews received his doctrines and imbibed the principles of his religion, they had no ground to hope for everlasting happiness, which, on the other hand, would be allotted to all who should receive his doctrines and imbibe his principles: comp. *v.* 35, 40, 47, 63.—That *Matt.* xxvi. 28, furnishes no objection against the representations above, see Chap. ix.

‡ *Matt.* vii. 21. § *Matt.* xii. 50.

in order to obtain acceptance with him; and they give no intimation, that faith in the efficacy of the death of Jesus is necessary for that purpose, or that it was the death of Jesus which renders our imperfect obedience acceptable to God. Paul says, 'I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the MERCIES of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, ACCEPTABLE to God.* Again, 'We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, ACCORDING TO WHAT HE HATH DONE, whether it be good or bad.'† The Apostles do indeed lay the utmost stress on faith in Jesus; and when it is recollected of what nature were the objects of his mission,‡—how essentially necessary faith in him, as the Son of God, was to the accomplishment of those objects,—that in the circumstances in which the Gospel was first preached, nothing but vicious affections or practices could prevent faith in Jesus,—and, on the other hand, that, in those circumstances, speculative belief naturally and usually produced practical belief, in other words faith and obedience were usually found connected as cause and consequence,—who can feel any surprise at the degree of importance attached to faith in Jesus, especially when it is taken into account, that it placed the believer in a state of great and

* *Rom.* xii. 1.

† 2 *Cor.* v. 10. See also *Gal.* vi. 7—10. *Eph.* iv. 20—24. vi. 8. 1 *Tim.* vi. 17—19. 1 *John* ii. 3—5.

‡ See Sect. X. of this Chapter.

glorious privilege.* But what has all this to do with faith in the atoning merits of Christ, or in the efficacy of his death?

It is not probable that a dispensation which is so clearly and repeatedly stated to have had its origin in the free mercy of God, could contain any thing which should lessen, in human apprehension, those ideas of his mercy which had been authorized by a former dispensation;† and accordingly we find,

VII. That in the object of John's baptism, and in those declarations of Jesus Christ which preceded his death, there is nothing to authorize the belief, that the divine justice would no longer allow the *free* exercise of mercy to the repentant sinner, that now a satisfaction must be offered for the sins of men before they could obtain forgiveness, that now God must be appeased or rendered propitious to his guilty creatures by the sufferings of an innocent and divine person, —but, on the contrary, the benevolence of God is represented as complete and unlimited, his mercy as unrestrained and independent of all external causes except the moral quality of its object, and his forgiveness as ready to be *freely* bestowed, whenever the sinner complied with the condition of pardon, a change of heart and life. The object of the Baptist's mission, in order to prepare the way for that of the Christ, was, to enjoin repentance for the forgiveness of

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* See p. 163. † See Sect. II.

sins. And from the teachings of our Lord himself we learn that God 'is kind to the unthankful and to the evil;'* that He, and He alone, is good;† that He is our Father, exercising the most benevolent care over His creatures;‡ and that He will forgive those who exercise genuine forgiveness towards others;§ and from the parable of the prodigal son we are led to underderstand, that He is ready to receive into His forfeited favour those who seek for it by truly repenting of their sins.

VIII. Throughout the discourses of our Lord to his disciples *after* he rose from the dead, we find nothing which intimates that his death had been a satisfaction to divine justice, and that it was in consequence of his death that the divine mercy could now be extended to sinners; but on the contrary, he speaks of God|| as standing in the same relation to his disciples as to himself; and when he authorized his Apostles¶ to proclaim remission of sins among all nations, he does not in any way connect it with faith in the merits of his death, but simply with *repentance.* He does, indeed, in the preceding verse, speak of the necessity of his sufferings and resurrection to the due fulfilment of the prophecies respecting the Christ, in the Scriptures of the Old Testament; but he does not say one word which intimates, that his death in any sense rendered God placable, or gave

* *Matt.* vi. 45. † *Mark* x. 18. ‡ *Matt.* vi.
§ *Matt.* vi. 14. || *John* xx. 17. ¶ *Luke* xxiv. 47.

repentance its efficacy, or enabled God to extend mercy to the penitent; but merely says, 'And that in his name,' that is, by his authority, 'repentance and remission of sins should be proclaimed to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.' This is the more remarkable, because we find that, in several instances, his object was to convince his disciples, so 'slow of heart to believe all which the prophets have spoken,' that it was necessary that the Christ should suffer. The two grand mysteries to the Jews, (a suffering Messiah, and the extension of the Gospel blessings to *all* nations,) he clearly declares to them, though they do not seem yet to have understood the latter; but he does not intimate, what would have set in the most striking light the necessity of his death, that by it God was enabled to extend his mercy to mankind. Why should he have kept back from them this most important circumstance, now that the atoning sacrifice had been offered up? He gives them, what might reasonably be supposed to be the *whole* of their commission;—they were to proclaim his glad tidings to *every* creature,* to proclaim repentance and remission of sins to *all* nations,† and to teach men to observe whatever he had commanded them;‡ yet he says nothing respecting that which some consider as the most essential circumstance in the Christian scheme of redemption, that by his death he had purchased the

* *Mark* xvi. 15. † *Luke* xxiv. 47. ‡ *Matt.* xxviii. 20.

blessings of pardon and everlasting life, nor intimates that faith in his atoning merits was necessary to enjoy those blessings.—But some may infer, from *John* xiv. 26, that by the gift of the holy spirit *new* knowledge was to be imparted to the Apostles;* that, therefore, *after* they received it, this most astonishing mystery—that the justice of God required, and was satisfied by, the death of Christ—might be known by the Apostles, though their great Instructor had not himself communicated it; and that this may account for the silence of our Lord on the subject:†—I observe, however,

* The structure of the Greek, however, shows, that the relative refers to both, *all things;* and the sense of the passage appears to me obviously this: 'The miraculous communications which you will receive, will make you clearly understand, and bring back to your recollection, all the things which I have said to you relative to the purposes of my mission.'

† In corroboration of this, we may be referred to *John* xvi. 12, 13, in which our Lord tells his Apostles, that he had still many things to say to them, but that they could not then bear them; and that the holy spirit would guide them into all the truth: how then shall we explain ch. xv. 15. 'I call you friends, for ALL THINGS which I have heard from my Father I have made known unto you.' The two passages, taken in their connexion, appear to me obviously to have this import. Jesus had actually declared to his Apostles the whole purport of what he had heard from God, but their Jewish prejudices prevented them from imbibing some of the principal of those truths which he had in various ways made known to them. In the state of perturbation and anxiety in which they necessarily were, when he thus addressed them, truths which he had before intimated, or even declared to them, would have made no impression on them, except by still more shocking their feelings; and their kind Master did not press these things, but referred to the period, when, by means of divine communications, they would be led into all the truth, and would be enabled to understand and perceive the importance of those divine purposes, which, till they were released by his death, resurrection, and ascension, from their expectations of a national and triumphant Messiah, could not be intelligible or grateful to their minds.—In this view, both passages perfectly harmonize with the passage referred to in the last note.

IX. That the Apostles, *after* the ascension of Jesus and the reception of the spirit, in no case intimate, that God could not consistently with his justice forgive sins without the satisfaction made by the death of Christ,* or even that He forgives sins for the sake of Christ, or of what he did and suffered for us;†—but on the contrary, their declarations perfectly harmonize with those of Moses and the Prophets, of the Baptist and our Saviour: they represent God as *freely* pardoning the truly penitent, and a change of heart and life as the condition on which the mercy which He had authorized Jesus to offer, would be extended to the sinner.‡ They do indeed represent belief in Jesus § as necessary (which undoubtedly it is) to a participation of gospel privileges, and of course to the mercy of God as offered through Jesus Christ; but in no instance do they speak of belief in his atoning merits, as

* *Rom.* iii. 26 seems a little to oppose this assertion; but the appearance arises from a misrepresentation of *v.* 25. See Chap. IX.

† The only passage in which such unscriptural language occurs in the Public Version, is *Eph.* iv. 32, of which the true rendering is, 'And be ye kind one towards another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God by (εν) Christ hath forgiven you.' All that can be said in favour of the common rendering is, that the N.T. Greek allows of it: but it in no way suits the connexion. The fact obviously is, that the passage directly opposes the doctrine of satisfaction; for surely we are not commanded to forgive one another only when satisfaction is made for the injuries done to us: undoubtedly we are to forgive freely, and it is freely that God hath forgiven us by Christ.

‡ See *Acts* iii. 19. v. 31. viii. 22. xvii. 30. xx. 21. *Rom.* ii. 6—11. iii. 24. (comp. *Eph.* i. 7.) xii. 1. *Tit.* ii. 11—14. 1 *Tim.* iv. 8. 2 *Thess.* ii. 13, &c.

§ See *Acts* x. 43. xiii. 39. xxvi. 18. *Eph.* ii. 8. *Rom.* i. 16. iii. 22, &c.

requisite to render repentance acceptable.—The following passages are peculiarly important in this connexion. *Acts* xxvi. 18. 'Unto whom,' (*i.e.* the Jews and Gentiles,) said Jesus to his new Apostle, 'I now send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in me.* Wherefore, O king Agrippa,' continues Paul, 'I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision; but I declared first to those in Damascus and in Jerusalem, and throughout all the country of Judæa, and *then* to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn unto God, doing works worthy of repentance.' This I consider as a simple and comprehensive statement of the requisitions and blessings of the Gospel dispensation: and the passage is the more remarkable, because it contains the words of our Saviour himself. We find in them no reference to any mysterious efficacy in his death, still less to the necessity of faith in such efficacy; but a plain declaration of the manner in which pardon and everlasting life are to be obtained: and the following verse shows that the Apostle understood him as I do; and I cannot therefore perceive, why the disciple of Jesus may not be fully satisfied with these declarations of his Master as to the means of

* The natural construction of the Greek refers *faith in me*, πιστει τη εις εμε, to *sanctified*, ἡγιασμενοις: and though the clause is somewhat ambiguous, this appears to me to be the meaning of our Lord.

acceptance. And where the Apostle employs figurative phraseology, founded upon Jewish customs and opinions, and therefore to us obscure, in order to express his sense of gospel blessings, and of the Christian's obligation to his Lord for what he did and suffered to confirm and diffuse them, it appears to me perfectly reasonable to suppose, that in such cases he ought not to be understood as meaning any thing inconsistent with what he here and elsewhere expresses in plain and unambiguous terms; especially as he himself declares, *v.* 22, that he said 'no other things than those which both the Prophets and Moses spake of as about to come, that the Christ should undergo sufferings, and that he first, by *his* resurrection from the dead,* should announce light to the people *of the Jews,* and to the Gentiles.' —In Paul's Epistle to *Titus,* ch. iii. 4—7, his opinion respecting the free mercy of God is so distinctly stated, that I shall transcribe it as a kind of fundamental position, from which no ill-understood Jewish phraseology and imagery should induce us to depart. After describing the previous wretched state of mankind, he says, 'But when the KINDNESS of GOD our SAVIOUR, and *his* LOVE TOWARDS MAN appeared, HE SAVED us, not owing to works of justification which we did, but ACCORDING TO HIS OWN MERCY, by the washing of regeneration and the renovation of

* Compare *Rom.* i. 4. where only in the Scriptures the same phrase occurs, εξ αναστασεως νεκρων: see also *Heb.* xi. 35. Or, that he *become* pre-eminent by his resurrection from the dead, comp. *Col.* i. 18.

the holy spirit, which He shed on us richly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that having been justified BY HIS FAVOUR, we might become heirs as to the hope of everlasting life.'

I have already (see p. 7, 8,) mentioned my opinion as to the grand purpose of the work which was assigned to our Saviour: it may, however, be desirable to state the subject in a somewhat different manner.

X. The grand object of the Christian dispensation is, to communicate to mankind at large, (without reference to any civil or religious distinctions,) just and extensive views of the divine purposes respecting them; that thus they might possess all necessary encouragement and assistance in the attainment of spiritual excellence. These purposes, to speak generally, are, that this life is only preparatory to another, in which all will receive according to their works; and, that God will forgive sins upon repentance. With respect to the former, it was in the strictest sense *revealed;* and though many might, without the aid of the Gospel, have obtained a strong conviction that man will live again, yet the great bulk of mankind could not have understood the reasonings on which that conviction was founded; and to numbers of those who understood them, they would have appeared inconclusive. It is unnecessary here to show how essentially important the doctrine of a future life is, to give efficacy to the dictates of conscience, to enlarge our ideas of duty, to strengthen and enliven the

affections which we owe to God, to enable us to view all his dispensations as springing from benevolence, to raise our minds from sensuality to spirituality,* and to impart support and consolation under present afflictions: these things must be well known by every Christian observer: most Christians have themselves experienced the efficacy of this all-important doctrine; and the Christian philosopher sees *how* it is, that the hopes and fears of futurity are of such vast importance in the moral fabric of the mind. Had the Gospel taught us no more than this, he who rightly considered the subject in its various tendencies and relations would have welcomed it as the glad tidings of salvation.—The hope of pardon on repentance appears to have a more secure foundation in the moral analogies of the world than that of a resurrection; and the terms of pardon had actually been pointed out by the Jewish prophets. Still, as the privileges of the Jewish dispensation were exclusively confined to the people of Israel, —as the hope of forgiveness (being founded solely upon some inferences from the usual course of Providence, and at the same time opposed by others,) would generally be unsteady and unproductive,—and as the value of the gospel discoveries relative to a future state would have been essentially lessened if that hope had not also been

* I here employ the expressive phraseology of Hartley, to denote those states, in one of which the pleasures and pains of sensation have the chief, or at least a great share, in the actuating motives, and in the other of which the mental system is principally composed of the highest and most refined affections.

sanctioned and extended to all men,—the assurance of pardon to the truly penitent, which constitutes one object of the christian dispensation, must surely be regarded as a primary object.

So much respecting duty might have been known from the light of nature, and its dictates would have been so much confirmed and extended by the doctrine of a future state of retribution, that if only the *expectations* of mankind had been pointed out by the Word of God, the holy and happy tendency of his great work would have claimed our liveliest gratitude to HIM who sent him: but the value of the glad tidings which he brought is further enhanced by clear and comprehensive precepts of duty in all its branches, and by the most just and interesting views as to the divine attributes and government.*

The revelation of a future state, the assurance of divine mercy to the penitent, and the declaration of the terms of acceptance with God, constitute together the Gospel scheme of salvation:

* It is obvious, as I have more than once observed, that faith in Jesus, a conviction that he was the Son of God, was in the nature of things requisite, to enable any one to receive the benefits of his dispensation. In the Apostolical age the grounds of faith were so peculiarly striking, and so evidently just, that, where they were actually proposed, unbelief could spring only from wicked affections, and, therefore, itself shared and strengthened the criminality of them; nor was it in any way probable, that those who under the influence of such affections rejected the blessings of the Gospel, would ever repent and turn unto God. To them, therefore, the Gospel necessarily was a savour of death unto death; but those to whom it was not offered, could in no way be directly affected by its discoveries, nor interested in its promises or threatenings; and with respect to their condition hereafter, the Scriptures afford no ground to believe that any change has been made in it by the mission and death of Christ. They have their one talent, and their future condition will doubtless depend upon their improvement of it.

and I imagine that whatever else is stated in the New Testament respecting the redemption that is in Christ, is to be referred either to the means by which the blessings of the Gospel were confirmed and diffused, or to the inestimable value of its spiritual deliverance, or to the peculiar circumstances in which it was communicated to mankind.

In those circumstances the Gospel dispensation was peculiarly striking to the Jewish disciples. The Jews had long been accustomed to regard themselves as the chosen people of God; and to suppose that his choicest blessings could only be obtained by submitting to the Mosaic institutions, and that their ritual observances were at least requisite in order to gain his acceptance. It was to them one of the chief mysteries of the Gospel, that its privileges were to be shared by the Gentiles equally with themselves, and that their own former privileges in no way entitled them to the divine favour,—that 'in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision.' And it was this remarkable peculiarity of the new dispensation, in connexion with the means by which its blessings were assured and diffused,—the death of the Messiah,—which led the New Testament writers to the frequent use of that phraseology by which their own privileges had been denoted, and of those figurative expressions derived from their ritual, which were so well calculated to heighten the conceptions of their converts respecting the importance of their privileges, and of the means by which they were

communicated to them.—Those Gentile disciples who had previously observed the exclusive nature of the Jewish covenant, would naturally partake in the feelings of their brethren; but the grand source of astonishment to them would be, that though mankind had so much neglected God, and departed from what they knew of his will, yet of his own free and unmerited goodness he sent them the message of love and mercy by Jesus Christ.

One other circumstance, which was confined to the Apostolical age, must be taken into account when we are examining the language of the New Testament on this subject. Many of the first disciples received those miraculous communications which had so great a tendency to invigorate their convictions, and to elevate their affections; which gave a reality to their faith, and made them feel in a peculiarly powerful manner the obligations under which it laid them to cultivate holiness in heart and life. The holy spirit was imparted by Jesus, and its advantages were intimately blended with those which were more generally derived from the dispensation of which he was the Mediator; and hence language which may now with the greatest propriety be employed in reference to the blessed influences of his Gospel, sometimes in the Apostolical writings contains a reference to the miraculous agency which God empowered him then to exercise. That miraculous agency has now ceased: and whether in the usual course of the moral administration of providence, Jesus has any imme-

diate agency, or in any way directly influences the minds of his disciples, we do not certainly learn from the Scriptures.

XI. The christian scheme of salvation is uniformly represented as originating in the *free* mercy and love of God towards men. 'GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD, that He gave His only Son, that whosoever believeth in him may not perish, but have everlasting life;' and our Lord Jesus Christ 'gave himself for (περὶ) our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, ACCORDING TO THE WILL OF OUR GOD AND FATHER;'—and accordingly the Gospel is called, 'the GRACE OF GOD which bringeth salvation to all men.'*—Sykes, after adducing more than one hundred passages from the New Testament, of similar tendency with the foregoing, makes the following among other important observations: "Our Saviour speaks of the *love of God*, and of his *manifesting this love;* and the Apostles speak of the *grace* and *peace* of God, and of our being justified FREELY by His *grace*, and of God's reconciling the world to Himself by our Saviour's *coming* or *being sent* into the world and *dying:* and they tell us that all this proceeded from God's

* *John* iii. 16. *Gal.* i. 4. *Tit.* ii. 11. In this last text, the Public Version certainly leaves the natural construction of the original; which, however, does not imply, that all men are saved by the Gospel, but, that all, without any distinction, may share in its blessings, and that all who believe will share in them. The following are a few more of the many passages of similar import with these: *Acts* iii. 26. v. 31. xx. 32. *Rom.* i. 16. viii. 39. 1 *Cor.* xv. 57. 2 *Cor.* v. 18. *Eph.* i. 3. ii. 4—10. *Col.* i. 12—14. 1 *Thess.* v. 9. 2 *Thess.* ii. 13, 16. 1 *Tim.* ii. 4. *Tit.* iii. 4. *James* i. 18. 1 *Pet.* i. 3—5. v. 10. 1 *John* v. 11.

great love and *kindness* to us; and that by *grace we are saved:* but yet they never once say that this *grace* or *favour*, or *peace* of God, was *caused*, or *occasioned*, by what Christ *did* or *suffered;* but speak of it as proceeding from the *goodness* of God, *original, permanent, invariable* in Him *to the praise of the glory of His grace.*" P. 65. And again: "As the Texts of Scripture are very numerous which set forth the LOVE of God, His MERCY, and His GRACE or favour to both *Jew* and *Gentile*, so I have in this Chapter collected above a *hundred* passages which mention what God's designs to man were, and how he manifested them; and it is observable that not one mentions *God's* being *reconciled* to Man by the means of Christ. We find that God *gave* men *out of the world to Christ;* that He *gave the words* which Christ taught; that He *justifies* us *freely;* that he *blesses* us with all *spiritual blessings*, and *forgives* us all *trespasses:* but not a word that all his goodness was owing to or caused by any action or passion in our Saviour. On the contrary, it is said, *of His* OWN WILL begat he us with the word of truth; and *according to* His own purpose *and* grace. The language is as strong as well can be to express the *love* and *grace* of God to be original, inherent, uncaused in Him, and to come down from Him." P. 71.

XII. Of the Christian scheme of salvation, Jesus by divine appointment was the Mediator: in other words, he was the chief agent in that series of operations, by which the authority of

the message of pardon and everlasting life was established, the blessings of the Gospel made known, and the reception and diffusion of it accomplished. By his persevering and fearless declaration of the truths which he had received from God, in the midst of opposition and suffering; by his bearing testimony to those truths unto death and by death, even the death of the cross; and by the signal displays of divine power which God manifested in and by him, the all-important work which God sent him to do was fully effected,—the gracious purposes of God respecting mankind, and the means of obtaining His acceptance were clearly and certainly manifested,—and all who embraced the Gospel were thus placed in a state of great and glorious spiritual privileges and advantages, delivered from the fear of death, and put in possession of all needful assistance to free them from the slavery of sin, and fit them for 'the inheritance among the saints in light.' Such I am convinced is the extent of the scriptural views of the redemption that is in Christ, (separate from those which particularly respect the communication of it to the *Gentiles*, see p. 338;) and because Jesus was the appointed agent in thus effecting our deliverance from iniquity, (or saving us from our sins,) he is most justly termed our Saviour; and because, in order thus to save men from their sins, he submitted to great suffering and even unto death, every one who is duly sensible of the value of the glad tidings which he brought, must feel

lively gratitude to him, as, under God, the cause of eternal salvation to all who believe.

XIII. Great stress is obviously laid in the New Testament on the death of Christ, as a means of delivering men from their sins, and of reconciling them to God: and I never met with any Christian who denied the great importance of that event. The only point is, whether the efficacy of the death of Christ was immediate, (in some mysterious way procuring the pardon of sin, the availableness of repentance, and the final acceptance of the faithful;) or whether it depended upon its being necessary, in the circumstances in which the glad tidings of the Gospel were brought to men, to the assurance and extension of its blessings. There may be various modifications of these two cases; the former, for instance, may be extended to the doctrine of satisfaction: but one of the two must in some shape or other be adopted by all who abide by the representations of the Apostles, and connect ideas with their words: Either our Lord's death must have had its efficacy, wholly or in part, *out of the usual order* of providence, *directly* producing *without any intermediate agency* some change in the divine disposition, or purposes, or exercise in the divine attributes towards mankind,—or it must have been a means operating according to the usual order of providence, and in the then circumstances necessary to promote the purposes for which he came from God. Various plain and unambiguous declarations are in direct opposition to the former

supposition, and no plain positive declaration can be adduced in its support; and I cannot, therefore, receive it as Christian doctrine: on the other hand, the latter appears from the New Testament history obviously to have been the fact, and at the same time, taken in connexion with the voluntary and disinterested nature of the acute sufferings undergone, satisfactorily accounts for the stress which the Apostles lay on the death of Christ; and this, therefore, I regard as the scriptural view of the subject.

The best way of ascertaining the importance of any fact often is, to consider what important results would have been prevented, and what injurious consequences would have followed, if it had not taken place: for instance, in 1 *Cor.* xv. the Apostle not only states the all-important consequences of the resurrection of Christ, but also (*v.* 14—19) the deplorable state in which the christian believers would have been if that event had not really happened; and in like manner the vast importance of the fact, that Jesus was the Son of God, can only be fully appreciated by considering how great our loss would be if we were to be deprived of christian guidance, hopes, and consolations. It will assist in leading us to the truth as to the efficacy of our Saviour's death, if we pursue the consequences which in the then circumstances (and it were useless to consider any other) would have followed from his not submitting unto death; and if it appear, that in those circumstances Jesus could not have avoided

death, without either on the one hand destroying the authority of that message of pardon and everlasting life which he came to bring, or at least preventing the *extensive* reception of the offered blessings,—or, on the other, altogether deserting the purposes for which he was sent,—we can have no difficulty in accounting for the frequency and earnestness with which his death is dwelt upon by the New Testament writers, nor for the fact, that the benefits arising from his glad tidings are sometimes ascribed to his death.

I do not perceive that he could have avoided death in any but one of four ways: either *first*, by according with the wishes of the Jews, and assuming the office of a temporal Messiah; or *secondly*, by endeavouring gradually to instil into the minds of his countrymen more just views, and at the same time withholding the more ungrateful truths; or *thirdly*, by privately withdrawing into some place of secrecy where he might be secure from the attacks of his enemies; or *fourthly*, by employing his miraculous powers to effect his escape. If there appear to be any other case, I apprehend that it may fairly be referred to one or other of these; or at least that the same method of reasoning may be applied to it.

First, If Jesus had acceded to the wishes of the Jews, and come forward as a temporal Messiah, as their deliverer from Roman bondage, he might have gained every object of worldly ambition; but it must have been by the complete desertion of the purposes for which he came forth

from God, by the complete annihilation of all those important changes in the spiritual condition of men, which have been effected by his continuing even unto death to execute those purposes. He might thus have freed his countrymen from the Roman yoke, but he could not have freed mankind from the yoke of sin: he might thus have been a powerful monarch, but he could not have ruled in the hearts of men, creating them anew to righteousness and true holiness.

Secondly, He might (at least for a time) have avoided death by concealing offensive truths, and endeavouring gradually to prepare the minds of his countrymen for them, by giving them more correct notions as to duty and the divine purposes. —Let such as have studied the character of his countrymen in the gospel narratives, and in the writings of their own Josephus, say whether it is in the slightest degree probable, that those who rejected the evidence which Jesus gave, that he spoke under divine authority, because the truths which he declared were offensive to their prejudices, and hostile to their vices, would by any such means have been led to embrace the blessings of the Gospel, and submit to its requisitions:* and even for a moment admitting that by a long course of instruction he had persuaded a considerable part of the Jewish nation, how would such timid temporizing conduct, so utterly unworthy of one who knew that his mission was of the utmost importance, have diffused gospel

* See our Lord's own remark in *Luke* xvi. 31.

blessings through the Gentile world?* It is obvious too, that, if so far successful among the Jews, it would only have protracted the actual event; for by degrees the offensive truths must have been declared, and the offensive censures must at least have been implied, and a violent death, hastened by success, would at last have been the consequence. Or, if he had finally escaped a public and violent death, the invaluable advantages of his resurrection would have been totally destroyed, or their efficacy most essentially lessened.†

Thirdly, Jesus might have avoided death by privately withdrawing himself to some place of security. In this case the important instructions which he had communicated, would probably

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* It is clear that, except by a total change of circumstances, or by a great accession of miraculous interference, the Gentiles could have been christianized only through the medium of Jews or Jewish proselytes, or those who had gained from Judaism some correct notions of the attributes and dispensations of God.

† The resurrection of Jesus, if we follow the scriptural representations, answered at least three important purposes: it presented a most striking demonstration that he acted under divine authority in declaring the purposes of God,—it afforded a pattern and a pledge of our resurrection,—and it gave men an assurance of a future state of righteous retribution. Now the extensive diffusion of a thorough conviction of this fact required that his death should take place at such a time, and in such a manner, that it should not be a doubtful point, among distant Jews or proselytes to Judaism, whether Jesus really died: and it is impossible that there should have been any time more suitable to give publicity to the event, than the passover, when at least 1,200,000 persons attached to the law of Moses were on the spot, of whom a large proportion did not usually reside in Jerusalem, and numbers came from other countries; or any circumstances better calculated to give them the conviction that he really died, than those which actually occurred. Indeed we have no reason to believe that any denied the reality of our Lord's death, till some false or mistaken friends of the Gospel advanced this absurd and dangerous opinion, which the Apostle John, an eye-witness of the fact, severely but most justly reprehends.

by God that he was sent, and to declare truths of the greatest importance to the welfare of mankind, calculated, if received, to communicate the greatest blessings, but depending for their efficacy upon the reception of them;—a testimony which was to his disciples peculiarly impressive, because they knew that he was fully acquainted before-hand with his dangers and sufferings, and that he could at any period have escaped from them,—and which was peculiarly important, on account of the vast numbers of persons who, at the great festival of the passover, crowded to Jerusalem from all parts of the then known world. And by such miraculous interference, that last signal instance of divine approbation would either have been prevented, or its efficacy greatly lessened if not destroyed,—that striking display of the power of God, by which the divine authority of Jesus was established beyond all doubt, and his declarations sanctioned as the words of God:—if he had not died in the most public and indisputable manner, the convictions of his followers in his resurrection could not have possessed that firmness, by which they were led to sacrifice every temporal good, without

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authority from God, that he was the Son of God, that he had received from God his life-giving doctrines. The testimony of the witnesses of his resurrection borne by their death, was of high importance to give credibility to that fact, which of itself proves that Jesus is the Son of God; but such attestation was only corroborative, and in no individual instance necessary: the testimony thus borne by Jesus was indispensable, yet might have been avoided without the assertion of any falsehood, or the evasion of any truth; and it could only be prompted by the firmest confidence in God, and the most exalted benevolence to mankind.

the prospect of any temporal good, to promulgate doctrines in part founded on that fact, and at any rate deriving their chief authority from it; nor could the Apostles have succeeded in disseminating that lively faith in the divine authority of Jesus and his doctrines, by which such numbers were brought over from sin and ignorance to knowledge and holiness.

I have before observed, (see p. 8,) that it is impossible for us to say, that no other means of communicating gospel blessings could have been appointed by the Supreme Being;—they might have been kept separate from the Jewish prejudices respecting the Messiah; they might from the first have been made unconnected with Judaism; they might have been received without opposition, without suffering on the part of the appointed agent; and some other agent might have been appointed:—but the more we examine *all* the known circumstances under which they were actually communicated, the more we shall perceive that these were peculiarly fitted to make the reception of them cordial, extensive, permanent, and efficacious. And it ought always to be borne in mind, as an obvious principle of the divine government, and one which is requisite in order to bring into due exercise some of our highest powers, that miraculous agency is never employed where the effect can be equally well produced by the usual operation of moral causes.

When we thus consider the death of Christ, as on the one hand perfectly voluntary, and on the

other essentially requisite to an efficacious, extensive, and permanent diffusion of gospel blessings, and consider also the nature and value of those blessings, can we hesitate, with all our intellectual correctness, our refinedness of phraseology, and our customary rejection of the bold language of eastern metaphor, to speak of that event as a most important sacrifice for the best interests of mankind, as our ransom from spiritual bondage, as the means of pardon and everlasting life,—and to say that Jesus died for our sins, that he died that we might live, &c.? And when in addition to these things we take into account, that the sufferings and death of the Messiah were objects of such amazement to the Jews, yet necessary to accomplish the prophecies concerning him,—that the idea of a suffering Messiah excited the disgust of the prejudiced Jew, and that the doctrines of one who had been disgraced by the punishment of slaves and the vilest malefactors, were treated with ridicule and contempt by the philosophic Gentiles, yet that the sufferings and death of Jesus really presented the best proof of his disinterested love to men, and of his profound obedience to the will of God, —that the sufferings and death of Jesus were caused by the wickedness of his own nation,—that the Apostles had a very intimate acquaintance with all the painful and aggravating circumstances of those sufferings,—that they were witnesses of the most beneficial and strikingly rapid changes taking place, in the spiritual

condition of men, in consequence of his endurance unto death,—that the Easterns were accustomed to employ metaphors and allusions calculated to give quick and vigorous conceptions of truths or facts, and to dwell, as all persons of lively imagination do, on the most striking of a train of causes as what produced important effects in contemplation,—and lastly, that the Mosaic ritual and scriptural phraseology were a fertile source of metaphors and allusions which were well suited to soften down the prepossessions of the Jews against the gospel dispensation, to heighten the convictions of the believer, and to give impressive views of the importance of its blessings, and of the means by which they were communicated and assured;—when, I say, we take all these things into account, in addition to the voluntary nature, yet necessity, of the death of Jesus, can we wonder that the Apostles sometimes referred to this event all the blessings of the Gospel, and represented it under those figures with which their religious and national peculiarities so abundantly supplied them? And may we not justly wonder that any persons submitting their faith to the Scriptures, should make the literal (and then inconsistent and even false) interpretation of such expressions, the foundation of their doctrines, without any adequate regard to the plain declarations of the Scriptures fully according with our best and most exalted ideas of the divine perfections and government?

While meditating upon the lengths to which

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While meditating upon the lengths to which

is precisely the way to obscure the truth. If the Gospels, the Acts, and the undisputed Epistles of Paul, Peter, and John, do not contain this doctrine, the metaphors and allusions of the Epistle to the Hebrews cannot be admitted in proof of it, while so much uncertainty remains as to the genuineness of the Epistle; its evidence may be employed as a corroborative, but never as an independent ground of argument. What I conceive to be the true method in this state of doubt, is, first to consider the doctrine of St. Paul as contained in his undisputed writings, and then examine the amount of the expressions in the Hebrews; and it is my opinion, that if we do the Author of that Epistle the justice fully to consider the purpose for which he was writing, to take into account the nature of the figures and imagery which he employs, and to allow it to be highly probable that he did not propose to teach any other doctrines than those which Jesus and his Apostles had taught, we shall find that all his expressions admit of a satisfactory explanation agreeably to them.

Testimony of CHRIST *himself.*

The most important point is, in what light our Saviour himself represents the purposes of his sufferings and death. *He* must have been fully acquainted with the ends which they would answer, in effecting the salvation which he brought; and he expressly declares, 'All things which I have heard from my Father, I have made known

unto you.' And however much some ill-understood passages in the Gospel of *John* (ch. xiv. xv. xvi.) may seem to justify the supposition, that by the miraculous communications of the spirit some *new* knowledge was imparted, to myself it appears clear, that Jesus had declared to the Apostles the whole round of Christian truth; and that the real efficacy of the spirit, in this point of view, was to remove the darkness of Jewish prejudices, and thereby to enable them to comprehend and recollect those truths.*—Respecting the ends of his death, he speaks generally in *John* x. 11, 15, 'I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep.' 'I lay down my life for the sheep.' No one, I presume, can infer hence, that Jesus died for those who might believe in him, with a purpose *different* from that for which a good shepherd would lay down his life for his flock. The passage clearly means no more, than that he was about to lay down his life for the good of his disciples, to rescue them from spiritual danger: and if we turn to *v.* 10, we shall gain some idea as to the way in which his death would benefit them: 'I am come,' says he, 'that they may have life, and that they may have it abundantly.' In *v.* 17, we find a specific purpose for which he laid down his life,—that he might receive it again. And though he does not in this discourse say that his death would be the means of diffusing gospel

* See p. 331, *note*.

blessings among the Gentiles, he clearly declares, *v.* 16, that other sheep, besides those of Israel, would be brought into his fold.

John xii. 32. 'And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw 'all *men* unto me.'

Here our Saviour states distinctly one important consequence of his public death,—that mankind at large would be led to attend to his religion, and great numbers, both Jews and Gentiles, to embrace it. A similar mode of expression occurs in ch. iii. 14; 'As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, the Son of Man must, in like manner, be lifted up; so that every one who believeth in him [may not perish, but] may have everlasting life.' That by the last clause our Saviour here means, may possess the hope, may become the heir, of everlasting life, is probable from ch. v. 24, where he says, 'He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life,'—not surely hath it in actual possession, but in prospect, in hope.* How the death of Jesus gave that hope to every believer, must be obvious to every one: it was itself the strongest confirmation he could himself give of the doctrine of life; and his consequent resurrection was by the Apostles regarded as a divine pledge of it; see particularly 1 *Pet.* i. 3, 4. —We yet find not the slightest reference to vicarious punishment or satisfaction, &c. The next expression is stronger.

* This mode of expression illustrates the language of our Lord in *John* xvii. 5. See p. 293.

Matt. xx. 28. 'Even as the Son of Man came, not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many, δουναι την ψυχην αὐτου λυτρον αντι πολλων.' So also *Mark* x. 45.

Jesus came to bring pardon and everlasting life, by gospel promises and declarations to redeem men from iniquity: to assure and extend the blessings which he brought, he gave up his life; he could not otherwise have completed the grand scheme of spiritual redemption or deliverance, of which he was appointed the Mediator. He procured for us, then, the possession of those blessings by means of his death; and it was therefore our ransom or means of deliverance. I do not know how to express my own sense of the importance and value, and, *to us*, the merit of his death, than by this, his own representation of it. It was, as we have already seen, the *necessary* means of our deliverance, yet was *voluntary* on his part; it was our *ransom*. If any imagine that the expression means more,—that it was literally speaking, the price paid to some one for our deliverance, I have only to say, that they must consistently maintain that the price was paid to God: but the Scriptures declare, that we are redeemed by the blood of Christ, *from* our vain conversation (or conduct),* and by his death reconciled *to* God.†—The import of this expression of our Lord appears to me so simple and clear, and so obviously accordant with Unitarianism, that I cannot see why it should ever have been cited against it.

* 1 *Pet.* i. 18. † *Rom.* v. 10.

1 *Cor.* xi. 24, 25. 'This is my body which is broken for you.'—'This cup is the new covenant in my blood.'

The first clause of our Lord's words at the institution of the Supper,—'This is my body which is given for you,'*—implies no more than it says, that his death was *on our account*, or *for our benefit;* and the second,† though more particular, in no degree authorizes the doctrine of vicarious punishment or satisfaction, nor do I perceive how it can in any way imply them. St. Matthew has these words, 'This is my blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for many for the remission of sins.'‡ St. Mark has the same words, except the last clause, 'for the remission of sins.' St. Luke has, 'This cup *is* the new covenant by my blood, which is poured out for you.' And St. Paul, 'This cup is the new covenant by my blood.'§ As Paul expressly declares, that he received his account of the institution from the Lord himself, and states it in order to correct certain abuses which had been connected with the Lord's-supper, I cannot but suppose that the preference should be given to his account. If so, our Lord made the cup the symbol of the *new covenant*, which was confirmed or ratified by the blood or death of Jesus; and this is fully accordant with the views held out

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* *Luke* xxii. 19. ὑπερ.

† See *Matt.* xxvi. 28. *Mark* xiv. 24. *Luke* xxii. 20. 1 *Cor.* xi. 25.

‡ Τουτο γαρ εστι το αἷμα μου, το της καινης διαθηκης, το περι πολλων εκχυνομενον εις αφεσιν ἁμαρτιων.

§ Τουτο το ποτηριον ἡ καινη διαθηκη εστιν εν τῳ εμῳ αἱματι.

in the preceding pages. If we follow the account of St. Matthew, our Lord made the cup the symbol of the *blood* itself; but, since the import of Matthew's words cannot radically differ from that of St. Paul's 'the blood of the new covenant' must mean, the blood shed to ratify the new covenant;* and as the grand purpose of the new covenant was to redeem men from their iniquities, to turn them from the power of satan to God, in order that they might receive forgiveness of sins,'† it is said, that the blood of Jesus was shed, εις αφεσιν ἁμαρτιων, with a view to the remission or forgiveness of sins.

Luke xxiv. 46. 'Thus it is written, and thus it behoved the Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day.' See also *v.* 26.

Here our Lord intimates (as Paul does, *Acts* xvii. 3,) that his sufferings and death were necessary, in order to complete the prophecies respecting the Messiah; and these and the foregoing passages are, I believe, all in which he himself gives any intimation as to the purposes of his death.

Following then our Lord's own declarations, I say that his death answered the purpose of extending the blessings which he brought; that he submitted to it with a view to his resurrection, and, of course, to its consequent benefit to mankind; that he gave up his life as an attestation

* The allusion to a Jew must have been peculiarly interesting; see *Exod.* xxiv. 8.

† Comp. *Jer.* xxxi. 31—34.

to those doctrines which he brought from God; and that, as the object of the whole was the spiritual deliverance of mankind, his death was a ransom for many. All this fully accords with, and in part necessarily followed from, the purpose for which he most expressly declares he was born and came into the world,—to bear witness to the truth. And that what I have stated as to the efficacy of our Saviour's death (p. 8 and 342), is of the same import with his own declarations I am fully convinced; and I am therefore satisfied, that I possess all fundamental truth on this subject. However, as the Apostles are supposed to declare, or to intimate different doctrines, it is necessary to consider their expressions.

Expressions of the Apostle PAUL.

Acts xx. 28. 'To feed the church of the Lord, which he hath purchased with his own blood.' See p. 152.

The death of Jesus was a necessary, yet voluntary, means of furnishing those aids by which men were purified from their sins. Those who received the blessings of the Gospel constituted the *church;* they owned the authority of Jesus, and were his subjects. These he *acquired* by his blood.—The word περιεποιησατο, translated *purchased*, occurs only once more in the New Testament; *viz.* 1 *Tim.* iii. 13, where (and perhaps in this passage) it would better have been translated *acquired* or *gained.*

Rom. iii. 25. "Whom God hath set forth *to be* a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness *for* the

remission of sins that are passed, through the forbearance of God."

This is the common rendering of the passage, but it loses sight of the meaning of the original. The Apostle, employing a most beautiful allusion to the Mosaic ritual, represents Jesus as a Mercy-seat, ἱλαστηριον, (to all who complied with the terms of Christian redemption,) sprinkled with his own blood. 'Being justified,' treated and accounted as just, and made to share in gospel blessings, 'FREELY, BY HIS GRACE, by means of the redemption which is by Christ Jesus; whom GOD hath set forth as a MERCY-SEAT, (by means of faith,) in his own blood, for the manifestation of his clemency (δικαιοσυνης) respecting the remission of past sins, by the forbearance of God; —with a view to the manifestation of his clemency at the present time, so that he may be just,' or merciful, 'and the justifier of him who hath faith in Jesus.'*—It appears extremely difficult to ascertain the precise force of δικαιοσυνη, but Dr. Taylor, in his Key to the Apostolical Writings, ch. xvi. has clearly established, that the one here employed, is fully authorized by the usages both of the Old and of the New Testament.—If we adopt Archbishop Newcome's rendering, '*method of* justification,' the general sense is very little affected.

What has principally contributed to obscure

* I have endeavoured in the above translation to show the appropriate force of the prepositions, which occur with peculiar frequency.

the meaning of this highly interesting passage, is, that the words, *by means of faith*, have been connected with what follows, *in his*, or *his own, blood*,—and, that *just* is supposed to be placed in opposition to the clause following, *the justifier*, &c. With respect to the former, I have only to remark, that the expression, *faith in the blood of Christ*, is no where else to be found,—that if it were, as it must mean, generally, *faith in the beneficial effects of his death*, it determines nothing as to the precise nature of those effects,—and that to consider the words, *by means of faith*, as parenthetical, is an interpretation peculiarly suitable to the Apostle's positions, and completes the allusion to the real mercy-seat. And with respect to the latter, it should be observed, that if the two terms be to be taken in opposition to each other, this gives no real countenance to prevalent opinions, respecting the divine justice, as the passage then means—So that, though just, He might, without the slightest departure from His justice, receive into His favour those who, by submitting to the authority of Jesus, and embracing his life-giving doctrines, became fit objects of pardon.

Rom. iv. 25. 'Who was delivered up on account of our sins, and was raised on account of our justification, *δια την δικαιωσιν ἡμων.*'

The first clause expresses two things: that it was on account of sin that Jesus died; and, that it was for the sins of others, not his own. What is the scriptural sense of his dying for our

sins,* I have already sufficiently stated; and it is in no degree more difficult to perceive how his resurrection had efficacy in our justification. The Apostle says, 1 *Cor.* xv. 17, 'But if Christ hath not been raised up, your faith is vain; ye are still in your sins;' you have no adequate ground to hope for the blessings of pardon and everlasting life as offered by him: if he were not raised up, he was not the Son of God, his declarations had not divine authority, his death sealed no covenant of free mercy and forgiveness, your condition is forlorn, as it was before your faith in Jesus gave you those inspiring hopes by which the power of sin and the fear of death have been overcome, and yourselves thereby made fit to be partakers among the saints in light.—I would only further add, that if the *resurrection* of Jesus formed a part so essential in the Christian scheme of salvation, it must be regarded as at least of as much importance as his *death.* The *latter* was the *attestation of Jesus* to the covenant of mercy and life; the *former*, of *God* Himself. And I believe *no passage will be found in the New Testament which lays so much stress upon the* death *of Christ, as the Apostle does upon his* resurrection *in the passage here quoted from his Epistle to the Corinthians.* We are certainly said to be justified by his blood; but it is no where said that without the *death* of Jesus we should yet have

* The other principal texts in which it is said, that our Saviour *died for our sins*, are the following: 1 *Cor.* xv. 3. ὑπερ. *Gal* i. 4. περι. *Heb.* x. 12. ὑπερ. 1 *Pet.* iii. 18. περι.

been in our sins; nor do I know of any passage from which this can be justly inferred.

Rom. v. 9, 10. 'Much more then having been now justified by (εν) his blood, we shall through (δια) him be saved from punishment, οργης: for if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through (δια) the death of his Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by (εν) his life.'

This passage is a remarkable one: in the first place it shows that justification and final salvation are two distinct things; and secondly, that *the Apostle considered the* life *of Jesus, his being raised from the dead, as the chief means of salvation.*—How men were justified, or reconciled to God, by the death of Jesus, is evident enough from 1 *Cor.* xi. 25, (see p. 359,) compared with 2 *Cor.* v. 19: he thus ratified the covenant of reconciliation, by which God forgave men their past offences upon their sincere submission to the spiritual authority of Jesus; in other words, upon faith in him. In what sense the Apostle meant that the Christians would be saved by the life of Jesus, is less clear; but it appears to me, that it was by their acting agreeably to those principles and prospects which received their chief sanction and support from his resurrection; and in this opinion I am confirmed by *Rom.* vi. 4, 5. This, however, is not immediately connected with my present object.

Rom. xiv. 9. 'For to this end Christ [both] died and lived *again*, that he might have dominion over both the dead and the living.'

This passage clearly shows that, in the opinion

of the Apostle, one grand purpose of the death of Christ was the same with that of his resurrection,—that he might acquire spiritual dominion among men, (in other words, that mankind might become holy and happy by the influence of his doctrines,) and that, under divine appointment, he might be the final judge of all men.

Rom. xiv. 15. 'Destroy not him by thy food, for (ὑπερ) whom Christ died.'

If it had been clearly said that Christ *died* in our stead, I do not perceive that it would have justified the idea that he was *punished* in our stead. The simple and obvious import of such an expression would have been, that if he had not died we should have died; and as the death of Jesus was, in then existing circumstances, necessary to the accomplishment of our deliverance from spiritual death, this would have been strictly true. But the fact is, that the expression actually found in this and other similar passages, is exceedingly general, and denotes no more than that Jesus died for our benefit.*

* The following are the principal, if not all, of the other texts in which the death of Jesus is spoken of as being *for us, for men, for the ungodly*, &c. *Rom.* v. 6. 8. viii. 32. 1 *Cor.* viii. 11. δι' ὃν. 2 *Cor.* v. 15. *Gal.* ii. 20. iii. 13. (p. 369.) *Eph.* v. 2. (p. 372.) v. 25. 1 *Thess.* v. 10. *Tit.* ii. 14. *Heb.* ii. 9. 1 *Pet.* iv. 1. 1 *John* iii. 16.—In all these instances, except the one noticed, the preposition is, ὑπερ: the obvious force of which is *protection*. Jesus died to preserve us from great evil, from the evil of sin and all its ruinous consequences; he voluntarily gave up his life, as a necessary attestation to the divine origin of his doctrines, declarations, and precepts. In a very small number of instances, ὑπερ with a genitive denotes *instead of*, see 2 *Cor.* v. 20. *Philem.* 13. but, as is well known to every Greek scholar, this is an uncommon signification, and would most probably have been denoted by ἀντι.

1 *Cor.* v. 7. 'Take away thoroughly the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, inasmuch as ye are unleavened: for our paschal lamb hath been sacrificed [for us], *even* Christ.'

By the Jewish ritual, (*Exod.* xii. 15,) all leaven was to be put away on the first day of the passover. The Apostle having spoken, *v.* 6, of the necessity of removing the sources of moral contagion, under the figure of leaven, alludes to the circumstances of the Jewish passover, which was probably then at hand; as if he had said, You are under peculiar obligations to purify yourselves from all spiritual defilement, for Christ hath given up his life to deliver us from the power and consequently from the evil effects of sin. 'He died for all, (as the Apostle afterwards says, 2 *Cor.* v. 15,) that those who live, should no longer live to themselves, but to him who died and was raised for them.'—The paschal lamb (*Exod.* xii. 21—23) was killed, and the blood sprinkled on the door posts, in order that the destroying angel might not enter in: Jesus died, or sacrificed his life, in order that his disciples might be delivered from spiritual destruction. Taken thus as an allusion, the passage is highly beautiful and forcible: taken literally, it is very incorrect; for the sacrifice of Jesus and that of the paschal lamb agree in only one leading particular, that they were the means of preservation; and even then it proves nothing, for "the paschal lamb in Egypt was not to *atone* or *expiate* sins, nor was it a piacular sacrifice."—Sykes, p. 220.

2 *Cor.* v. 21. 'For him who knew not sin, *God* made *to be* sin for us, ὑπερ ἡμων ἁμαρτιαν εποιησεν, that we might become the justification of God through (εν) him.'

The expression *made sin* is no where found in the Old Testament as denoting *to make a thing a sin-offering*, (Sykes, p. 491.) The simplest meaning of the passage is, It has been so ordered by God, that one who was holy and undefiled underwent the punishment of a criminal, to the end that we (the Gentiles) might be "justified before God through him, so as to be admitted into the Christian covenant by faith, and into heaven, by adding obedience to faith." (See Newcome.) Jesus was made sin, inasmuch as he was treated as a sinner; we are made the righteousness or justification of God, inasmuch as we are treated as though we were righteous, on complying with the conditions of the Gospel covenant.

Gal. ii. 21. 'If justification *come* by the law, then Christ died in vain.'

This is part of Paul's animated and just censure of the temporizing conduct of Peter; in which he declares that an exact observance of the Mosaic ritual was insufficient to place a person in a state of justification. If it were sufficient for this purpose, then the new covenant, and consequently the death of Christ by which it was ratified, were unnecessary.

Gal. iii. 13. 'Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, becoming a curse for us.'

The word rendered *redeemed*, εξηγορασεν, might justly have been rendered *bought off*; and,

figuratively speaking, the death of our Saviour was a *price*,* inasmuch as it was the grand means, on his own part, by which gospel blessings were diffused; the rest was the immediate agency of divine power communicated to him. That it was not literally a price is obvious; for this would imply a *seller*, and assuredly we were not 'bought' from God, but 'to God;' (see *Rev.* v. 9).—What the *curse of the law* is, the Apostle states in *v.* 10. The new covenant delivered men from the necessity of these strict ritual observances: it was ratified by the death of Christ; and that death an accursed one (*v.* 13). Thus only he became a curse for men, and thus he delivered them from the curse of the law; and yet this simple passage being wrested from its connexion, has been construed so as to make God appear vindictive and unjust.

Eph. i. 7. 'By whom we have deliverance through his blood, εν ῳ εχομεν την απολυτρωσιν δια του αιματος αυτου, even the forgiveness of our offences, according to the riches of HIS grace,'—that is, the grace of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; see *v.* 3.

It appears to me to be impossible to read the whole of the context, ch. i. 3—ii. 10, with an unprejudiced mind, without perceiving, that the rich blessings of the Gospel originated in the

* These remarks will, it is apprehended, fully explain corresponding phraseology in 1 *Cor.* vi. 20. vii. 23. 1 *Pet.* i. 18. *Rev.* v. 9. &c. In 2 *Pet.* ii. 1. we find the expression, 'even denying the Lord, δεσποτην, that bought them.' The appellation δεσποτης, *sovereign Lord*, being appropriate to God, this passage must be referred to Him; comp. *Exod.* xv. 16. *Deut.* xxxii. 6. On the mode of expression, see Taylor's Key, § 12—15.

free mercy of God. As to the part here cited, believing, as I have so often stated, that, in then existing circumstances, the death of Jesus, though perfectly voluntary on his part, was necessary to extend and assure those blessings, I cannot hesitate in saying with the Apostle, that we have forgiveness of sins by means of his blood or death: but what this has to do with the doctrines of vicarious punishment and satisfaction I cannot perceive.

Eph. ii. 13. 'But now, by (εν) Christ Jesus, ye,' the Gentiles, 'who once were afar off, are brought nigh, *even* by (εν) the blood of the Christ.'

The new covenant extended its blessings to *all*, without *any* respect to ritual observances. Hence it placed in a state of privilege, those who before were without the *promise* of divine forgiveness and acceptance; it placed Jews and Gentiles upon equality as to privileges, and united them in one body. As the Mediator of the covenant, Jesus brought nigh those who before were afar off, and made peace between the Jews and the Gentiles; and this covenant he sealed with his blood: it was therefore by his blood, or by the cross, that these purposes were effected. The Apostle obviously lays a stress upon the redemption of the *Gentiles* being brought about by the *death of the Messiah;* and it must to a *Jew* be a most striking circumstance.—Since the primary object of the gospel scheme is to make men fit objects of divine favour, and since, as the first step, it offers forgiveness of past sins,

those who embraced it entered into a state of reconciliation with God. These remarks I imagine will be found sufficient to explain the passage succeeding that cited, *v.* 14—17.*

Eph. v. 2. 'And walk in love, as Christ also loved us, and gave himself up for us, ὑπερ ἡμων, an offering and sacrifice (θυσιαν) to God, for an odour of a sweet smell, εις οσμην ευωδιας.'

If any imagine that here the death of Christ is represented as making God propitious, let them turn to *Phil.* iv. 18, where the Apostle speaks of the things sent by the Philippians to him, as an odour of a sweet smell, οσμην ευωδιας, an acceptable sacrifice, θυσιαν, well-pleasing to God.' The expression in its simple force is beautiful and impressive, (see p. 352); but it gives no evidence in favour of the idea, that the death of Christ was, literally speaking, a propitiatory sacrifice.

Eph. v. 25, 26. 'As Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it, that, having cleansed it by the washing of water, he might sanctify it by the word.'

The grand purpose of the death of Christ is here distinctly stated; and I cite this passage chiefly to bring into view, what the common rendering conceals, the means of sanctification. Since, however, his obedience unto death was, in

* The chief passages in which our Saviour's death is spoken of as a means of *reconciliation, justification, sanctification, redemption,* &c. are the following: *Matt.* xx. 28. *Rom.* v. 9, 10, *2 Cor.* v. 21. *Eph.* i. 7. ii. 13. 16. v. 25. *Col.* i. 13, 14. 20—26. *Heb.* ii. 17. ix. 12. 14. 26. x. 10. 14. xiii. 12. *1 John* i. 7. *Rev.* i. 5. vii. 14.

then existing circumstances, necessary in order to give assurance and efficacy to his word, (or doctrines,) his death may be said to be the means of sanctification; and accordingly it is said by the Apostle John (1 *Ep.* i. 7), that 'If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, *God and* we have fellowship with each other, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.' This last clause is so frequently quoted separately from its connexion, that it is perhaps often forgotten in what case the blood or death of Jesus becomes the means of our deliverance and purification from sin, *viz.* 'if we walk in the light.'

Col. i. 21, 22. 'You who formerly were alienated, and enemies in your mind, by wicked works, he hath now reconciled in the body of his flesh, through *his* death, to present you holy, and spotless, and irreproachable in his sight, if ye continue grounded and stedfast in the faith, and be not moved from the hope of the Gospel,' &c.

The only peculiarity of the passage is the expression, 'in the body of his flesh;' which, however, is sufficiently explained by *Eph.* ii. 16. v. 30, and most probably, therefore, means 'in the Christian church.' This interpretation is adopted by Pierce and Macknight.

Expressions of the Apostle PETER.

1 *Pet.* i. 2. 'Chosen, according to the fore-knowledge of God the Father through the sanctification of the spirit, unto obedience and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.'

That is, by means of the moral purification effected by those principles which were con-

firmed by the miraculous agency of God, (comp. *v.* 22,) unto obedience, and the obligation of that covenant which was ratified by the death of Jesus. The allusion most probably is, to that significant action by which the obligation of the old covenant was declared and acknowledged; see *Exod.* xxiv. 3—8.

1 *Pet.* i. 18, 19. Knowing, that not by corruptible things, by silver or gold, have ye been ransomed (ελυτρωθητε) from your foolish conduct delivered down by your fathers, but by precious blood, as of a lamb spotless and unblemished, the *blood* of Christ.'

How the blood of Christ ransomed or freed them from their foolish conduct has been sufficiently explained, see especially p. 359. The Apostle either speaks of Jesus as a lamb spotless and unblemished, in reference to his innocence and holiness; or rather, speaks of his blood as being as precious as that of a lamb spotless and unblemished. The latter appears to me the true force of the original—'with precious blood, *precious* as *that* of a lamb,' &c. That there is any allusion here to our Lord's death being a propitiatory sacrifice, I can in no way perceive. If the allusion be to the paschal lamb, see p. 368.

1 *Pet.* ii. 24. 'Who himself bare away our sins, in his own body, to the cross, επι το ξυλον, that we being dead to sins might live to righteousness; by whose stripes ye have been healed.'

As the death of Jesus, in then existing circumstances, was a necessary means to the accomplishment of our deliverance from the power of sin, he is here represented as carrying our

sins with him to the tree, crucifying them with himself, (comp. *Rom.* vi. 6.) The whole of the impressive passage of which this is a part, contains an obvious reference to *Isa.* liii. in which are described the sufferings of Jesus and the purposes of them.* Some have supposed, with probability, that in this verse, and in the corresponding expressions in *Isa.* liii. 6. 11, 12, and *Heb.* ix. 28, there is an allusion to the scapegoat (*Lev.* xvi. 20—22); and if this be the fact, the expression 'in his own body' may be used by way of contrast.

Expression of St. JOHN.

1 *John* ii. 2. 'And he is a propitiation for (περι) our sins; and not for (περι) ours only, but also for (περι) *those of* the whole world.' *So also* ch. iv. 10. 'In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son *as a* propitiation for (περι) our sins.'

The last passage (as well as several other parts of the Epistle) so clearly proves that Jesus, by being a *propitiation* or *reconciliation* (ἱλασμος), did in no way make God merciful, or propitious, that one cannot but wonder that Christians should ever have adopted ideas so derogatory from the divine character.

Allowing, what I think probable, that the Apostle used the term ἱλασμος, *propitiation*, (which

* Several expressions in that very interesting chapter are thought peculiarly suitable to the common doctrine of atonement. The remarks, however, made in this chapter, appear to render it unnecessary for me to enter into the particular consideration of those expressions.

is found no where else in the New Testament,) with a natural allusion to the propitiatory sacrifices of the Mosaic ritual, still, in order to render the term any proof of the doctrines of satisfaction, vicarious punishment, &c. two things must be shown: 1. That the Apostle intended to represent the death of Christ as really a propitiatory sacrifice, like those under the law: and 2. That those propitiatory sacrifices made satisfaction for sin, or rendered God propitious to men, &c. Now, neither of these is the fact; for in the *first* place, if Christ agreed with the propitiatory sacrifice in one circumstance, *viz.* in placing the offender in a state of reconciliation with God, he differed from it in many others:* and *secondly*, none even of the *propitiatory* sacrifices of the *Mosaic* ritual imply a *vicarious substitution.* "It is a mistake to think, that a lamb or a bullock were appointed by God to be slain *in lieu of* the offender, or *instead of* the sinner. Whatever instances of this sort may occur in heathen writers, yet in the Law and the Pro-

* "He had no imposition of hands; his blood was not sprinkled upon any altar; no offender offered him to God: man who was the offender, and was liable to the just anger of God, never thought of treating Christ as his offering, he never designed him for such a purpose; he never presented him before God; he never desired God to accept him; he never desired God to forgive the sins he had committed, by accepting this oblation; he never said, intended, or imagined, that Christ was given by him for his soul. Nor is it conceivable that that could be deemed a propitiatory sacrifice for us, that was never thought of by us, nor known, nor did we act as if we imagined any such end of his death, or that he was a proper sacrifice. Did we make any confession of our sins over him? or did any elders of any congregation, or any one else do it for us, or in our name?" Sykes, p. 340.

phets we find not a single instance where any sacrifice was to be offered on such an occasion."* The real state of the case respecting the Jewish propitiatory sacrifices appears to me to be, that they were appointed only in cases of *ritual* neglects, or sins of *ignorance;* that they were the *appointed* means of replacing the offender in a state of *legal* or external privilege, and so far in a state of reconciliation with God, considered as the King of the Jews; and that their *moral* efficacy depended solely upon the dispositions with which they were offered. That they might and did afford some impressive allusions to the Jewish Christians, I readily admit; but that those allusions, however they may be pushed beyond the established usages of language, afford any just

* Sykes, p. 399. This judicious writer in p. 328, &c. has many important remarks respecting the Jewish propitiatory sacrifices of which the following is a summary. 1. Where the law appointed *excision* (or cutting off) as the punishment of any crime, there was no expiation by sacrifice. 2. The life of an animal is not ever in the O. T. called λυτρον, *ransom;* nor is there any such expression as αντιλυτρον, αντιψυχον, ισοψυχον, λυτρον επι ψυχης, *i.e. in lieu of, life for life, soul for soul, equivalent, ransom for soul,* and such like. 3. Propitiatory sacrifices were appointed only in cases of *ignorance* in the offender; see *Num.* xv. 22—31. *Immoralities* properly so called, committed *wilfully*, have no sacrifices appointed for them; but all propitiation was made for *ignorance*, or *errors* in *rituals*, or offences against the *positive* laws of the land; and the propriety of it in these cases easily appears from the peculiar nature of the Jewish policy. The only instances in which atonement is connected with wilful immorality are in *Lev.* vi. 1—7. xix. 20—23. As to those mentioned in the former passage, the offender first made restitution to the injured party for the injury which he had done, and then in order to be admitted again to legal privileges, offered a propitiatory sacrifice. In the other case, the offender was scourged (see the Hebrew or the margin of the P.V.) and afterwards on offering a sacrifice was restored to legal privileges. 4. On the grand day of expiation, a general propitiatory sacrifice was offered for *errors, neglects* of legal orders, or similar cases. 5. Expiatory sacrifices were also appointed for *things* and *places*.

foundation for the doctrines which have been inferred from them, respecting the death of Christ being a *satisfaction*, *a substitution*, *a means of propitiating God*, and so on, I can in no way perceive; and as those doctrines are in direct opposition to various plain and obvious declarations of Scripture, I cannot hesitate in pronouncing them unscriptural.

The expression of the Apostle John, with which I began, admits of two explanations equally consistent with what is known from reason, and revelation, of the love or goodness of God. (1) Jesus was a *propitiation* or *reconciliation concerning our sins*, inasmuch as he was the mediator of the covenant of mercy, and pointed out the means by which divine forgiveness was to be obtained; inasmuch as he was the appointed agent in the deliverance of mankind from the dominion and consequent effects of sin, and thus of restoring men to the favour of God, *of reconciling man to God.* Or (2) with a more specific reference to his death, he was a sin-offering, or offering on account of sin, inasmuch as to complete the execution of his great work, he offered up his life, and thus placed mankind at large in a state of spiritual privilege, by assuring to them the promise of forgiveness and everlasting happiness upon repentance and obedience.—It appears to me most probable, that when the Apostle says that Jesus was a propitiation or reconciliation concerning our sins, he refers to *all* which Jesus did and suffered in order to render men fit objects for the divine mercy.

Epistle to the Hebrews.

As no expressions occur in the Revelation which have not been already considered, I may now observe, that with the exception of those found in the Epistle to the Hebrews, I have examined all the phraseology respecting the death of Christ, which appears to oppose what I have stated as the Scripture Doctrine of Redemption by Jesus Christ; and that as nothing has occurred, in the undisputed writings of Apostles, which in any way really opposes it, I cannot admit that what may be found in that Epistle ought to be allowed to decide against that doctrine, even if it appeared positively inconsistent with it. I shall however consider a little the expressions on which so much stress is generally laid, previously observing from Sykes, p. 345, that the Writer certainly had in view "to show, that whatever were the benefits or advantages which the Jews might pretend to under their law, or whatever was looked upon by them as excellent or eminent in that, the followers of Christ had the *same* at least, or what was *better*, and in a more excellent manner."*

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* Much is usually inferred from the expressions of the Writer to the Hebrews, respecting the typical nature of the Mosaic institutions. It may assist the reader in extricating himself from the labyrinth in which these *inferences* involve us, if he attend to the following passage of Dr. Sykes, taken from his Paraphrase on the Hebrews, Note on ch. ix. 24, where will be found an induction of passages proving his assertions.

"A *Type* is, *what by the appointment of God* prefigures *something future;* it is what *adumbrates*, or is designed by God to *adumbrate* something else. So Dr. *Outram de Sacrificiis*, p. 203, 204. It is usually so understood, as to signify a sign *or symbol of something*

Heb. ii. 17. 'That he might be a compassionate and faithful HIGH-PRIEST in things relating to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people, εις το ἱλασκεσθαι τας ἁμαρτιας του λαου.'

The original verb, and the noun ἱλασμος used by St. John (p. 375), have the same origin and correspond in force; and it would have prevented much error, if the royal translators had rendered the latter as they have the former,—*reconciliation* rather than *propitiation.* Jesus is spoken of as a *mercy-seat* and as a *sacrifice;* here, and in several other parts of the Epistle, he is represented as the *High-Priest* (who sprinkled the mercy-seat with blood, and offered up the sacrifices); and it is upon this latter allusion to the Jewish ritual, which I believe is found only in this Epistle, that so much has often been said, respecting the *priestly office* of our Saviour. It

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else, designed by God to prefigure *that future thing:* and hence in general it is inferred that the end and design of all types is to *prefigure* Christ and his church. The difficulty will be to show, or to prove, the *sacrifices* of the law, or the *holy of holies,* or any of those things which usually are imagined to be *types* of Christ, *e.g.* the *brazen serpent,* or *Jonas,* or any other persons or things, to have been instituted or *designed* by God on purpose to *prefigure* Christ, or his actions, or his church. And the reason of the difficulty is, that not one of these are ever expressly said to be instituted with any such design: and if we do not presuppose any such designed institution to prefigure any thing in Christ, the reasoning is equally strong and just throughout the Gospels, and this Epistle. I would not be mistaken or misrepresented as if I thought there were no instances of types, as signifying prefigurations of future events. There are many such in the Scriptures: but in no place where this word occurs throughout the New Testament does it ever signify, or at least it cannot be *proved* to signify, that any thing in the law was *designed* to *shadow out* or to *prefigure* Christ, or his kingdom."—After adducing all the passages in the N.T. in which the word τυπος occurs, Sykes concludes, "It is remarkable enough that in not any one does it signify, an instituted designed prefiguration made by God of any thing that was to be done by Christ, or in his kingdom."

is a most remarkable circumstance that he should have been truly and properly a Priest, and should really and literally have exercised the office, without his having known it, or at least without his ever intimating any thing of the kind. And if he were a Priest only figuratively, and is spoken of as such, solely in reference to the Jewish ritual, and to remove Jewish prejudices, surely those who regard the religion of Jesus as a spiritual service, free from 'the weak and beggarly elements' of the Mosaic ritual, cannot be blameworthy in making such a figurative representation no part of their system, inasmuch as the reality makes no part of Christianity.

There was great propriety in thus representing our Saviour to the Jews; but it strikes me, that, to the imagination of a Christian, it is rather derogatory from the dignity of our Lord's office, to speak of him under this character. The office of Jewish High-Priest and that of our Saviour, fully agree but in these two leading points,—both were supreme under the respective dispensations, and both had the ministry of reconciliation communicated to them; but it will not be found that the High-Priest effected any *spiritual* deliverance, that he removed *moral* impurities, that he gave to men those glorious hopes and prospects which, in millions of instances, have enabled the Christian to triumph over sin and death; it will not be found that he abolished death and redeemed men from iniquity; nor that any thing which God wrought in or by

him, nor any thing which he did or suffered assured to men such blessings as we enjoy through our Lord Jesus Christ. If it be necessary to employ any figurative representation in order to endear to our minds the work and character of our Saviour, let us rather speak of him, as he spoke of himself, as the good Shepherd who laid down his life for the sheep.—How Jesus made reconciliation as to the sins of the people, I have already sufficiently explained in p. 366, 371, and 376, &c. 'God was, by Christ, εν Χριστῳ, reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing to them their offences,' (2 *Cor.* v. 19); and Christ made reconciliation, inasmuch as he was the mediator of this new covenant and died to ratify it.

In various parts of the Epistle we find references to the Priesthood of Christ. It was the Writer's object to show, that whatever there was of excellence in the Jewish ritual, there was something similar to it, of equal or superior value, in the Christian system. His argument on this particular point is, in whatever respect the office of the High-Priest is dignified or interesting, that of Jesus has equal or greater dignity or interest; —and it is not wonderful if (in the midst of much that is strikingly beautiful and pathetic) he employs the Jewish modes of interpreting Scripture, and dwells upon single and obscure points of resemblance, in thus endeavouring to interest the feelings and remove the prejudices, of his fellow Jews. With those analogies which do not refer to the *sacrifices* offered up by the High-

Priest, I have nothing to do; and I shall therefore confine myself to a brief explanation of those which appear to give some countenance to the idea, that the death of Christ, considered as a sacrifice corresponding to those of the law, rendered God propitious, or made satisfaction for sin.

Heb. vii. 27. 'Who needeth not daily, as the High-Priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for his own sins, and then for those of the people; for he did this once for all, when he offered up himself.'

Here, for the first time, the Writer brings in the death of Christ, in direct reference to the Mosaic ritual; and it is to show that it was unnecessary for him to offer sacrifices *daily;* for since our High-Priest (*v.* 28) was perfected (τετελειωμενον) for ever perfected (τελειωθεις) by sufferings (ch. v. 8, 9), one such sacrifice was sufficient. The sacrifices of the Law cleansed the High-Priest from his *ceremonial* defilement; the sufferings of Christ completed the *perfection* of his *moral* character. This is here the point of resemblance, and the Writer carries it no further; for he does not, in what here follows, make any allusion to the second object of the legal sacrifices, 'for the sins of the people.'

Heb. viii. 3. 'For every High-Priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices; wherefore *it is* necessary that this *High-Priest* also have something which he may offer.'

The necessity is obviously the necessity of legal fitness. If Christ had not had somewhat to offer, he could not have been said to have fulfilled the office. This verse appears to assign a reason

for what may be considered as implied in *v.* 1. (comp. ch. i. 3); he offered his sacrifice and then ascended to heaven: the succeeding verse assigns the reason for his not exercising his Priesthood on earth.

In this chapter the Writer declares, that the covenant of which Jesus is the Mediator, is a better covenant than the old one; and having established this, in the next chapters he shows its superior efficacy in moral purification. The ritual sacrifices, he clearly states, had no further effect, than to remove ritual impurities; and they were merely imposed (comp. *Gal.* v. 1), till the time of reformation, (διορθωσεως, ch. ix. 10,) when the right way of spiritual deliverance should be declared,—till that covenant should be brought into effect, which was ratified by the blood of Jesus. Now as that covenant had for its object, spiritual repentance and holiness on the one side, and merciful forgiveness on the other, the Writer with great justice represents the voluntary sacrifice by which it was ratified, as of infinitely greater importance than those which were the appointed means of removing legal disqualifications merely; and without any violence to truth, he speaks of it as procuring those blessings which, in then existing circumstances, could not have been assured to us without it.—After these general remarks, a few words will suffice for the explanation of the separate parts.

Heb. ix. 12. 'Christ—entered once for all into the most holy place, not by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood,'

yielding up his own life to accomplish the will of God concerning mankind, thus 'having obtained an eternal redemption,'—a deliverance not from the present penalties and disqualifications of the law, but 'eternal salvation TO ALL WHO OBEY HIM;' ch. v. 9.

Heb. ix. 14. For if the sacrifice of *bulls* and *goats* was the appointed means of removing legal impurities, 'how much more shall the blood of the Christ,' a rational being, holy, and obedient to God, 'who, through the eternal spirit,' under the guidance of the spirit of God, with a full acquaintance with His will and desire to obey it, 'offered himself spotless unto God,' devoted even his life, though himself free from guilt, to accomplish the gracious purposes of God towards mankind, to assure to them the hope of pardon and everlasting life,—how much more shall such a sacrifice 'cleanse your conscience from dead works,' from evil desires and dispositions, and the dread of punishment for past sins, 'so as to serve the living God!' See p. 372, 383.

In ch. ix. 15,* the Writer distinctly states the grand purpose of the death of Christ, which is also assigned by our Saviour, and forms the basis of the whole phraseology in the Epistles which is so deplorably misunderstood, to the obscuring of some of the simplest and most important declarations of the Gospel,—*viz.* that those who are called, (to whom the blessings of the Gospel are offered, and by whom they are accepted,) might receive the promise of an eternal inheritance. The death of Christ ratified the new covenant,—in then existing circumstances, its

* The following is Newcome's rendering of this passage. 'And for this cause *Christ* is *the* mediator of *the* new covenant; that, death having taken place for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, *by his death* those who are called might receive the promise of the everlasting inheritance.'

blessings could not have been assured and extended without it,—and Christ submitted to it with a view to his resurrection, and all its great and glorious consequences.* After having dwelt upon this idea, he states the fact, (*v.* 22,) that, in the Mosaic institutions, almost all things were purified with blood, and that there was no instance of the remission of ritual offences, without the shedding of blood; and this leads him to remark, that there was a peculiar fitness that, in the new dispensation, purification should be made with superior sacrifices. What he refers to was obviously the death of Christ, and he remarks, (*v.* 26,) that the Christ 'hath been manifested for the removal of sin,' to give every suitable aid and encouragement in the acquisition of holiness in heart and life, 'by the sacrifice of himself.'

Respecting ch. x. 5, I have already made some remarks, (see p. 271); and there is very little in the chapter which requires any additional explanation in reference to my present object. So far from giving any countenance to a doctrine which one of its adherents has called *unaccountable* and *irrational*,† the chapter contains passages directly opposing it; see *v.* 7, 10, 16—18:

* It can scarcely be necessary to remind the reader, that the rendering of διαθηκη, *covenant*, by the word *testament*, greatly obscures and indeed perverts the sense of the Writer.

† Mr. Thomas Bradbury says, "The SATISFACTION of Christ is "an UNACCOUNTABLE IRRATIONAL doctrine which DESTROYS "EVERY NATURAL IDEA WE HAVE OF DIVINE JUSTICE, and lay "aside the evidence of the Scriptures, is so far from being true, "that it is RIDICULOUS." See his Sermons, p. 39, 40.—I rejoice in the belief that it is as inconsistent with the Scriptures as it is with reason.

and however difficult it may be in some cases to discover the precise ideas which the Writer intended to express, it appears to me perfectly clear, that the views which I have so often stated, (see p. 8, 352, &c.) fully account for the strength of his expressions, and afford the clearest solution of them. The leading idea through the whole is, that the death of Jesus ratified the new covenant; that his blood was therefore the blood of the covenant: and this is the light in which our Saviour has represented it, and which without doubt has been the origin of most of those expressions in the Epistles, which many have made the foundation of "an unaccountable irrational doctrine," in no way justified by the representations of Jesus himself, and in my apprehension inconsistent with them.—One expression may be thought to require distinct notice, *viz. v.* 14: 'For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.' To see the force of this, we must attend to *v.* 1, 2, and 11. The Writer there argues, from the continued representation of the legal sacrifices, that their efficacy was limited and temporary; and that they could not give those who offered them a complete assurance of forgiveness: on the contrary, the death of Jesus ratified a *perpetual* covenant, by which God promised, that he would no more remember the past sins and iniquities of those who complied with the terms of that covenant. There was therefore no need of more sacrifices; since those who, by their belief in

Jesus, were brought into a state of spiritual privilege, who thus were sanctified, obtained a complete assurance of forgiveness by means of his one offering. In what sense it may be said that forgiveness was obtained by the death of Christ, I need not again explain: see p. 384.

There are three terms applied to Jesus, which have contributed to confirm the ideas so widely prevalent respecting vicarious punishment, satisfaction, &c.: *viz.* MEDIATOR, ADVOCATE, and SURETY. The last occurs in *Heb.* vii. 22; and I cannot do better than quote the words of Mr. Wright, (*Anti-satisfactionist*, p. 354). "It is very common for reputed orthodox Christians to call Christ the *Surety* of sinners, and to talk of his becoming surety to God for them; but never in the Scriptures is he called the surety of sinners, or said to be a surety to God for us. Once only is he called a surety, and then it is of the testament or covenant. He is so called because the new covenant was lodged in his hands, and he confirmed it by his death. His surety-ship has no relation to his becoming responsible for the sins of men, but to his fully attesting the truth of the Gospel, and to his giving us the strongest assurances that all his promises shall be accomplished. The former would destroy our personal responsibility; the latter fills us with faith and hope, and stimulates to obedience."—That his being styled *Mediator** has nothing to do with

* 1 *Tim.* ii. 5. *Heb.* viii. 6. ix. 15. xii. 24.

the doctrine of atonement, is obvious from *Gal.* iii. 19, where Moses is spoken of as a mediator, inasmuch as he was the medium of divine communication as to the old covenant. For the same reason Jesus is called mediator. He "was God's minister between Him and sinful man, delivering the Gospel, or the word of reconciliation, to mankind, as Moses delivered the Law to the Jews."—If the appellation *Advocate* given by the Apostle John* prove any thing respecting the efficacy of our Saviour's present interposition in rendering God merciful, it proves too much,—that the *death* of Christ had not the efficacy assigned to it. I understand the words of the Apostle as implying, 'If any man sin, let him not despair: one still lives, lives in the enjoyment of peculiar intercourse with God, of peculiar proofs of his approbation, who has done every thing which was requisite to assure us of mercy and forgiveness; and on his declarations we may safely and securely rely: we have a friend, who came to heal the broken hearted, who died for us, and who now lives for ever with the Father,—Jesus Christ the righteous.'

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

I HAVE now examined all the modes of expression, and most of the leading texts, in the New Testament, that are generally thought to

* 1 *John* ii. 1. The original word is παρακλητος, several times employed by our Lord (in *John* xiv. xv. xvi.) in reference to the holy spirit.

what Isaiah (xliii. 25,) says, 'I, even I, am he, saith the Lord, that blotteth out thy transgressions FOR MINE OWN SAKE, and will not remember thy sins: and again, (ch. l. 2,) 'Is mine arm shortened at all, that it cannot redeem? or have I no power to deliver?' And the New Testament declares, that God forgives us FREELY: and there is not one text in either of them, that speaks of the sufferings of Christ as a *punishment;* or one that says, that they were *intended* to vindicate the authority of God's laws; much less mentions the *necessity* of such a *vindication,* and that God *could not* forgive sins *without* it. This is all human invention. Dr. Sykes says very truly, 'When I look over every passage* that mentions the effect of Christ's death, or what he did, or why he suffered, I do not find the *authority of God's laws* mentioned among them.† And can that be supposed an end of the sufferings of Christ, which is not once mentioned to us; at the same time, that we are immediately and directly concerned in it, and perhaps we only?'

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* "The principal texts wherein the ends of Christ's sufferings and death are mentioned," are enumerated by Sykes, p. 402; and I shall here refer to them for the benefit of the reader. *Matt.* xx. 28. *Mark* x. 45. *John* xii. 32. iii. 14, 15. 2 *Cor.* v. 15. *Gal.* i. 4. iii. 13. *Eph.* i. 7. *Col.* i. 14. *Eph.* v. 25—27. *Col.* i. 21, 22. *Eph.* ii. 14—16. 1 *Thess.* v. 10. *Rev.* v. 9. 1 *Pet.* ii. 24. *Heb.* ii. 14, 15. ix. 15. 1 *Pet.* ii. 21.

† In another part, (p. 70,) Sykes says, "It may justly seem unaccountable, that the sacred writers should never mention so material a point, as God's sending His Son into the world, and letting him suffer in order to consult the *honour* of His *laws,* or to vindicate His *own honour,* if that were the reason of Christ's sufferings. Now what is not even mentioned in Scripture as the reason of Christ's sufferings, should not be asserted as a Scripture doctrine."

(Scripture Doctrine, p. 352.)" Taylor's Ben Mordecai, Letter V.*

(4) The doctrines of satisfaction and vicarious punishment render it requisite to suppose, as the advocates for them say, that he endured suffering "as under the charge of guilt;" and they go further, and say, that "he was oppressed with innumerable and abominable crimes," that he had "a painful sensation of them," and that he plainly became "an object of God's wrath."—After quoting these expressions from Hervey's Theron and Aspasio, and Venn's Complete Duty of Man, W. Ludlam continues, "Here are EVANGELICAL PARADOXES enough—to solve one we create many. Thus we find perfect innocence and real guilt united in Christ. No consciousness of sin, yet a painful sensation of it." "He offered himself to God without spot and without blemish; yet at that very time God beheld in him a deluge of iniquities. *Lastly*, he in whom God was well-pleased, was made the BUTT of His *infinite* indignation." Ludlam afterwards quotes some further representations from these writers, respecting the necessity of supposing that our guilt was imputed to Christ, in order to

* "Men may glean up scraps of Scripture," says Ludlam, "to suit any purpose,—compare the *tenor* of what is said by these writers with the *tenor* of what the Apostles say. We find nothing in their writings about Christ's being justly or truly punished; about imputation of sin, or a charge of guilt; about standing in our law-place as a substitute, or obligation to punishment; about commutation of persons and penal satisfaction; yet all this is dignified by some with the title of EVANGELICAL PRINCIPLES." Essays, Vol. I. p. 129.

vindicate the justice of God. "And now," he adds, "what does this defence of God's justice amount to? God, by an act of His irresistible power, makes Christ guilty of all the sins of all believers in all ages. Then beholding in him a deluge of iniquities, God's anger is kindled. He smites with the sword of His vengeance for those very sins of which He Himself had made Christ to be guilty! and this is called a just displeasure in the Deity!" (See Ludlam's Essays, Vol. I. p. 112. 115.)—Into such absurdities do men run, when they leave the simple statements of the Scriptures. According to these writers, our Saviour during his agony in Gethsemane was the object of God's wrath: "*God was now become* INEXORABLE." What different views do we find in the New Testament. 'He was heard in that he feared,' or rather 'for his godly fear, απο της ευλαβειας,' saith the Writer to the Hebrews (ch. v. 7): 'He died the JUST for the unjust,' saith the Apostle Peter (1 *Ep.* iii. 18): and our Lord himself says, 'I know that Thou hearest me ALWAYS;' and 'For THIS my Father LOVETH me, because I lay down my life that I may receive it again.' (*John* xi. 42. x. 17.)

(5) The doctrines of satisfaction and vicarious punishment, followed to their just conclusions, destroy the force of Christian sanctions. Some would deny those conclusions; but others admit them. Hervey, as quoted by Ludlam (Vol. I. p. 83,) says, "the debt of penal suffering, and "debt of perfect obedience, are fully discharged

"by our divine surety, *so that we are no longer* "*under the necessity of obeying to obtain an ex-* "*emption from punishment.*" There is reason to fear that such baneful language is not unfrequently uttered from the pulpits of those who style themselves Evangelical preachers; and it is at once obvious, that in so far as its influence is not checked by the plain and often repeated declaration of the Scriptures,—that God will render unto every man according to his deeds, —it must directly tend to subvert the foundation of Christian holiness.—How destructive these doctrines are (so far as they are allowed their genuine operation) of those views of the character and dispensations of God which we are encouraged by the Scriptures to entertain, and which I have already stated in different parts of this and the preceding chapter, it cannot be necessary to show. We have reason to be thankful, that though men, by a perversion of the language of the Scriptures, have derived these doctrines from them, yet that the same source supplies the antidote also.

(6) Many argue the necessity of an *infinite* satisfaction, from the position, that sin is an *infinite* evil, being against an infinite being, and therefore deserves infinite punishment. Without entering into the absurdity of the supposition that a *finite* being can be an *infinite* sinner, I cannot omit to quote here the statement of one singular consequence, which appears inevitable to follow from it. "If sin be an infinite evil,

one infinite person could make satisfaction for only one sin; for as the number of sinful acts committed is not infinite, sin, if infinite at all, must be infinite in its nature, and unless each sinful act be infinite, sin in the aggregate cannot be so; for, if finite quantities be added together ever so far, they never will make an infinite total. But if every sinful act be infinite, it follows that even an infinite person could make satisfaction for but one sin; a thousand such persons would be necessary to satisfy justice for a thousand sins." See Monthly Repotitory, 1809, p. 330.

(7) The doctrines of satisfaction and vicarious punishment are the chief support of the doctrine of the proper deity of Christ; and that on the other hand supports them. If Christ were not truly and properly God, his satisfaction would not have been adequate; and if he made an adequate satisfaction, he must have been truly and properly God. "Finite creatures," says Hervey, "cannot make an infinite satisfaction: "our Lord being truly and properly infinite, he "finished his work at once.—His sufferings are "adequate, nay, on account of his infinite nature, "they are more than adequate to an eternity of "punishment." In my first and second parts, I have shown the foundation of my own conviction, that, as to nature, Jesus was truly and properly man, and consequently no more; and though I have not entered at large upon this ground of argument against the doctrines of

satisfaction, &c. yet it is obvious that they must fall to the ground at once, if that conviction be a well-founded one: and on the other hand, if the death of Christ answered no further purpose in the redemption of mankind, than could be effected by one who was truly a human being, the improbability of the common opinions as to the person of Christ is most strongly increased. —But independent of what I regard as the fact, that those opinions are totally unscriptural, it appears to me, as it has done to others, that they are directly inconsistent with each other, unless they are accompanied with the admission of the position, that *God the Son* suffered and died on the cross: for if only the MAN CHRIST JESUS suffered and died, it was the MAN only who made satisfaction.

(8) If the efficacy of the death of Christ be what is represented, it must have had that efficacy altogether independently of his doctrines and precepts. Now, though the death of Christ was one means of our redemption, and in the circumstances of the case a necessary means, yet it is never represented as the sole means, or even as of itself adequate to effect the end. On the contrary, as is well observed by Henry Taylor, "we are said to be saved by faith, by works, by the word of God, by baptism, by hope, by grace, by the death of Christ, by his life, by the words of St. Peter, by the words of St. Paul, by the foolishness of preaching, by calling on the name of the Lord, by enduring unto the end, &c.; by

real repentance, and in His final acceptance, if, in obedience to His will we deny ungodliness and worldly desires, and live soberly, righteously, and religiously in the present world; and to resign ourselves and all our concerns and interests, for this life and another into His hands, casting all our cares upon Him, since He careth for us.

It is because I believe that the doctrines which I have defended in these pages are the doctrines taught by Jesus and his Apostles; that many of those opinions which oppose them have the direct *tendency* to give, or to countenance, injurious views of the character, dispensations, and will of God, and to check or debase some of the most worthy affections of our frame both respecting our Maker and our fellow-men; and that these doctrines, on the other hand, are eminently calculated to form and cultivate those habits of heart and life which constitute vital godliness;* —it is from these convictions, that I have been led to enter so fully into the subject: and I shall deem myself abundantly recompensed, if, under the blessing of God, my present labours should contribute to diffuse the spread of those principles, which are rapidly gaining ground, and which I trust another generation will see generally prevalent among those who make the Scriptures their ultimate rule of faith and practice.

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* See a very excellent paper, entitled, A View of Unitarianism as connected with Vital Godliness, in the *Monthly Repository*, 1807, p. 77.

I may be permitted also to refer the Reader to a tract, entitled, *The Beneficial Tendency of Unitarianism:* being the ixth Chap. of the *Examination of Archbishop Magee's Charges.*

APPENDIX.

No. I.

Respecting the Introduction of Luke's Gospel.

THAT the Introduction to Matthew's Gospel was not originally a part of the Gospel, appears to me highly probable from the considerations stated in note (†) p. 20. If this be given up, as not really written by Matthew, and consequently of no authority, all those arguments against the Introduction of Luke, which are derived from comparing it with the Introduction to Matthew,* fall to the ground at once; and we have only to consider the external evidence against it, and that presumptive evidence which the contents themselves afford.

As to the external evidence against the genuineness of the Introduction, it appears to me very slight. We have only the judgment of Marcion, (who lived, however, in the early part of the 2d century,) without knowing the grounds of his judgment, to enable us to ascertain its value; and though, from the circumstance that the Gospel of Matthew was originally written in Hebrew, we can account for the incorporation of the Introduction with it, yet, as far as I can perceive, we can show no probable way in which the Introduction of Luke could have become incorporated with his Gospel, so as to have

* The chief difficulty with respect to the census spoken of in *Luke* ii. 1, arises from the supposition, founded solely on the Introduction to Matthew, that our Lord was born in the reign of Herod. —That the decree of Augustus was probably issued after the death of Herod, and that it was not fully put into execution, see the Monthly Repository for June 1822.

been early, extensively, and universally received as a part of it, if it had not really been written by Luke.

There are certainly several internal difficulties in this portion of Luke's Gospel, independently of the Introduction to Matthew; but there is only one of them which can weigh much against the great body of external evidence,—I mean the contradiction which there is between the narrative contained in ch. i. 26—38, (if the common interpretation of it be the true one,) and various expressions in the writings of Luke and in other parts of the New Testament. The appearance of contradiction, however, chiefly arises from interpreting the words of the Angel (as Luke has represented them in his Greek translation of them) by the assertions of the Introduction to Matthew, instead of interpreting them by Luke's own expressions, and the declarations of his friend and master the Apostle Paul. If the passage be genuine, there can in this case be no real contradiction; and if, on the other hand, it will admit of a just interpretation, independently of the meaning assigned to it from the Introduction to Matthew, then the supposed contradiction affords no ground for giving up the genuineness of it.

It appears to me that the following is the real import of the passage. The Angel, after his salutation, perceiving Mary troubled at his words, encourages her with the declaration that she had found favour in the sight of God. He then proceeds to the purpose of his mission, telling her that she would conceive and bring forth a son, whose name she was to call Jesus, and of whom he declares, 'He shall be great, and shall be called Son of the Most High: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.' Mary obviously understood the Angel to mean, that she should *immediately* conceive;* and she

* Mary's mind was in a state of agitation, and the words of the Angel, even as represented in our own language, might lead her to this expectation; but it would be still more caused by the ambiguity of the Hebrew language, which having no regular present, often expresses the present by the future.

replies, 'How shall this be,* since I know not man?' The Angel probably knew no more than what he had already communicated: at least he says no more. He had told her (*v.* 28) that the Lord would be with her; he now again assures her of the special protection and blessing of God, 'The holy spirit will come upon thee, and the power of the Most High will overshadow thee;† therefore‡ also that holy child which shall be born *of*

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* If *Mary* were not of the family of David, (and we have no ground in the Scriptures to suppose that she was,) the difficulty which she manifests might arise from at least three considerations: The improbability that the child of one so poor should ever be king of Israel, especially in the then circumstances of her nation; the impossibility of her conceiving at once in the course of nature; and the impossibility of her offspring being the decendant of David, if she conceived without the intervention of man.

† Whatever is the meaning of the second clause of *v.* 35, 'the power of the Most High will overshadow thee,' it is reasonable to suppose, from the structure of the Hebrew language and from the force of the words themselves, that the first clause, 'the holy spirit will come upon thee,' has the same general import. The mode of expression in *Acts* i. 8, clearly shows that the words of this clause have no peculiar reference to the supposed exertion of divine influence; they merely imply generally, the special operation of divine power: the second clause more particularly specifies the manner of that operation,—that the power of God would be employed in protecting her. It appears to me impossible to read *Ps.* xci. and cxxi. without perceiving that the mode of expression in the second clause is peculiarly appropriate to the *protecting* power of the Supreme Being. In xci. 1, the Psalmist says, 'He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty;' and in *v.* 4, 'He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust,' where the Septuagint has Εν τοις μεταφρενοις αυτου επισκιασει σοι.

‡ The chief difficulty of this interpretation is respecting the reference of διο, *therefore.* It may be taken two ways, both independent of the common interpretation. (1) We may consider the words of the Angel as elliptical, implying what Mary's question suggested. She had said, 'How shall this be?' the Angel replies, Thou shalt be under the special providence of the Most High,—plainly implying that therefore these things should come to pass. Every Greek scholar knows that the particles of inference very frequently refer, not to what is actually said, but to what is implied; and in this case *therefore* may refer to what is obviously implied by the declaration of the Angel, *viz.* that all would happen as he had said. Upon this mode of interpretation, nothing is added to what the Angel had before said: Since he shall be the Messiah, he shall

thee shall be called Son of God;' as if he had said, Doubt not that all will happen as I have told thee; the powerful agency of the Most High will be thy safeguard, and he will bring about those purposes which I have declared unto thee; wherefore thy holy offspring 'shall be called Son of God,' shall be designated as one peculiarly the object of the divine care and concern, peculiarly honoured with the divine favour, and specially appointed by God to a glorious and important commission.—The Angel then refers her to the miraculous event which had recently taken place in her own family, as a pledge that God would accomplish His purposes respecting her and hers; and Mary, still apparently uncertain *how* they were to be accomplished, expresses her pious submission to the disposals of God.

If this interpretation (or any other which does not suppose that the conception of Jesus was miraculous) be justifiable as far as the passage itself is concerned, this is all which is requisite; for every external consideration is in favour of it. The people at large, and even those who lived at Nazareth, regarded him as the *son of Joseph*:* his early disciples regarded him as the *son of Joseph*:† it was universally expected among the Jews that the Messiah would be of the family of David;‡ Jesus himself certainly sanctioned this idea, and was frequently addressed by the appellation *Son of David;* and the Apostle Paul expressly asserts that his Master was the descendant of David, and obviously lays great stress upon the fact.§ If it be said that Jesus, though not the son

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be called Son of God. (2) The word *therefore* may refer solely to the last declaration of the Angel. Since on account of her offspring, who was to fill so important a station, Mary was to be under the special protection of God,—since he was to be so much the peculiar object of the divine care and favour, that even before his birth he should be preserved from evil,—on this account also, διο και, (as well as on account of his exalted designation,) he should be called Son of God.

* *John* vi. 42. *Luke* iv. 22. *Matt.* xiii. 55.

† *John* i. 45.

‡ *John* vii. 42.

§ *Acts* xiii. 23. *Rom.* i. 3. 2 *Tim.* ii. 8. See note (‡) p. 47.

of Joseph, might have been the son of David, I admit the possibility, but cannot see how the probability of it can be maintained. If Luke had known that Jesus, though the son of Mary only, was still the son of David, he could not, as far as I can perceive, have done otherwise than give *Mary's* genealogy up to David, as well at least as that of Joseph, which in this case would have been nothing to the purpose;* and it is scarcely conceivable that he should so distinctly declare, as he twice does,† that Joseph was of the family of David, and yet never intimate that Mary was also a descendant of David, if Jesus were the son of Mary only. Indeed it appears to me that the words of the Writer of the Introduction (that is, as I see little room to doubt, Luke himself,) are scarcely consistent with the supposition that Jesus was not the son of Joseph. At the time of the annunciation, Mary is spoken of as 'a VIRGIN espoused to a man named Joseph;' *before* the birth of our Saviour, Mary is spoken of as being 'his espoused WIFE:' in ch. ii. 33, we read, his 'FATHER and mother‡ wondered at

* It is reasonable to suppose that Luke meant by his genealogy to prove that Jesus was of the seed of David, εκ σπερματος Δαβιδ. Now, if Heli were the father of Joseph, Luke's genealogy proves nothing to this purpose, unless Jesus were the son of Joseph; and that Heli was not the father of Joseph, we have little more than the assertion of later writers made to explain the dissonance between the genealogy of Luke and that prefixed to Matthew's Gospel. It appears to me next to impossible, that Luke, knowing that Jesus was not the son of Joseph, and that Heli was not the natural father of Joseph, should assert, that Jesus was 'the son of Joseph, who was the son of Heli.' If this opinion had been what is generally supposed, he must surely have said, that Jesus was 'the son of Mary, who was the daughter of Heli.'

† Ch. i. 27, 'to a virgin espoused to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary.' Ch. ii. 4, 'And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth into Judea, to the city of David which is called Bethlehem, (because he was of the house and family of David,) to be enrolled with Mary his espoused wife, who was great with child.'

‡ This is Griesbach's reading; the Received Text has 'Joseph and his mother.' This last is the mode of expression in *v.* 43; which shows that the Evangelist could, if he had held the opinion generally maintained, have employed a sufficiently appropriate mode of expression. In *v.* 43, however, Griesbach marks, as a somewhat

those things which were spoken of him:' in *v.* 41, Joseph and Mary are spoken of as 'his PARENTS;' and in *v.* 48, Mary is represented as saying to him, 'Thy FATHER and I have sought thee sorrowing.' And if we proceed into the universally acknowledged writings of Luke, we find expressions of the same import. He records the words of Peter,* implying that Jesus was the descendant of David; and those of Paul, expressly asserting it:† he records also the words of the people of Nazareth, 'Is not this the son of Joseph,'‡ without any where informing us that Jesus was not so: and he does himself expressly declare, that Jesus was the son of Joseph,§ and through him traces up his descent to David.

When the idea was first suggested to me, that Luke's Introduction would not, *by itself*, authorize the doctrine of the miraculous conception, I could not but regard it as improbable. Further examination, however, has led me to the conclusion, that though the narrative in ch. i. 26—38 of Luke's Introduction, admits of a suitable interpretation agreeable to the assertions of the Writer of the Introduction to Matthew, yet of itself it neither declares, nor necessarily implies, that Jesus was not the

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probable reading, 'his parents did not know it,' further marking 'his parents' as somewhat probably to be omitted.

* *Acts* ii. 30—32. † *Acts* xiii. 22, 23. ‡ *Luke* iv. 22.

§ *Luke* iii. 23. I am aware that the words ων ὡς ενομιζετο υιος Ιωσηφ, 'being as was supposed the son of Joseph,' are, when taken separately from their connexion, somewhat ambiguous: in their connexion, however, they can scarcely have more than one meaning, *viz.* that Jesus really was the son of Joseph; for it is highly improbable, indeed next to impossible, that such a judicious writer as Luke should give a genealogy of our Lord's descent from David, *through Joseph*, if Joseph were only *supposed* to be his father. The force of ὡς ενομιζετο appears to me to be this. It is far from improbable, that some Gentile converts had taken up the idea that Jesus was not the son of Joseph, but had been conceived by the immediate interposition of God, (see note, p. 47). If Luke knew that such an opinion had ever been entertained, he would naturally say, in reference to our Lord, 'being, as he was considered, the son of Joseph,' *i.e.* being not what some have imagined, but what he was generally believed to be, the son of Joseph.—If the meaning of νομιζομαι given by Pearce be adopted, (see Improved Version,) the expression ὡς ενομιζετο does not require this reference.

son of Joseph; and that as the remainder of Luke's Introduction, and various other parts of the New Testament (and even of Luke's writings,) plainly imply, or directly declare, that he was the son of Joseph, every solid principle of interpretation should lead us to reject the doctrine of the miraculous conception, unless it can be proved that the Introduction to Matthew formed a part of the original Gospel.* That there is great internal

* In the *Reply to Archbishop Magee*, p. 299, I expressed the expectation that I should be led to examine a little the statements in the Notes of the *Improved Version* (the 4th and 5th Ed.,) respecting the Introduction of St. Luke's Gospel. The paper which was inserted in the *Monthly Repository* for 1822, p. 345—350, seems, however, to render the execution of this purpose less necessary; and I have only to state here, in reference to the summary objection urged against the above interpretation in the Note on *Luke* i. 4. (*viz.* "that the words have hitherto been universally "understood as plainly asserting the miraculous conception of Jesus "Christ, and that no other interpretation was heard of for 1700 "years,") that the doctrine of the Introduction to Matthew necessarily led to the common interpretation of that of Luke; that when the genuineness of the former is relinquished, we are to interpret the latter independently of it; and that so interpreted, there is nothing adequate to justify the common opinion. The representation given by the Writer of *Matt.* i. 18, was probably originally derived from the relation of the circumstances which St. Luke has recorded; and when that representation was received as authentic, (that is, undoubtedly, from the earliest period of the Greek translation of St. Matthew's Gospel,) it would naturally be employed to explain them.

I may be allowed to subjoin here an extract from the Paper just referred to, as conveying my sentiments of the value of this introductory portion of St. Luke's Gospel.

"As to the Introduction of Luke, I see no reason to deny its genuineness.—I cannot estimate its evidence as of equal weight with those parts of the Gospel which respect the ministry of Christ: St. Luke could scarcely have had such indubitable means of knowledge with respect to the events recorded in the Introduction, as he possessed of those which occurred thirty years after. But the diligent research, sound judgment, and faithful accuracy, which his invaluable writings shew to have been his constant characteristics, will not allow me to withhold my assent to facts which he has recorded, and which he obviously believed with undoubting credit, till better cause is assigned than the 'fabulous appearance' of some parts of the things related. I am not without a perception of the difficulty attending some parts of the Introduction; but, taken generally, I think the history of great moment; and among

presumption against that doctrine must be obvious to all; and I have no doubt that it has been, in the minds of many, one of the greatest stumbling-blocks with respect to Christianity: but I must repeat, that, true or false, it scarcely affects the question as to the nature of Christ. To give the fullest efficacy to his example, and particularly to give full force to the pledge which his resurrection affords, that all men shall be raised from the dead, it was, perhaps, expedient that he should be like his brethren in this as well as in all other respects: but whether he were conceived by the miraculous agency of God, or by the agency of God operating according to the usual laws of nature, determines nothing as to the question whether or not he were a proper human being.

No. II.

Evidence of the Old Testament.

In the preceding sheets I have very little entered into three clases of arguments of some importance respecting the Unitarian controversy; because my object was to show that Unitarianism is the doctrine of the Gospel: *viz.* 1. The difficulties attending the Trinitarian and Arian schemes, without reference to those derived from

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the great objects which the events recorded would accomplish, were the strengthening the expectations which even then existed of the near approach of the Messiah; the preparing Mary to watch with peculiar assiduity over the spiritual growth of one who was to be holy from his birth; and the training of Jesus himself to that character of mind, and in that culture of holy faith and obedience, which made him eminently fitted for the great work before him. The character of Jesus, as we know it must have been *before* his great work commenced from what we see of it afterwards, affords to my mind a powerful evidence to the general authenticity of the Introduction." (3d Ed.)

the Scriptures: 2. The evidence of the Old Testament: 3. The opinions of the early Christian believers.—As to the *first* class, so far as respects the doctrine of the Trinity as maintained in the Creeds and Articles of the Church of England, I wish to refer my readers to the Summary of Unitarian Arguments, at the end of Thomas Cooper's Essays, where they will find a complete and rigid *demonstration*, that that doctrine necessarily involves "contradictions and absurdities."—With respect to the *third* class, I refer to Mr. Belsham's Letters to Mr. (now Dr.) Pye Smith, (first printed in the Universal Theological Magazine, and since published separately,) which contain a masterly summary of the progressive steps by which Christians have advanced from 'the simplicity that is in Christ,' to doctrines which I am satisfied no unlearned, unphilosophical, unprejudiced reader of the Scriptures could ever have derived from the perusal even of our authorized version of them. The conclusion of that summary I shall here quote. "From this brief re-
"view of the rise and progress of anti-christian errors,
"concerning the person of Christ, I conceive that it will
"appear to every competent and impartial judge, that
"notwithstanding the late rise of Arianism, the date of
"what now passes for orthodox Trinitarianism is still
"later; and that I was perfectly correct in the assertion,
"that from the condition of a man approved of God,
"which is the doctrine of the New Testament, our Lord
"has been advanced, by the officious zeal of his mis-
"taken followers, first to the state of an angelic or super-
"angelic being, which was the error of the Gnostics;
"then to that of a delegated maker and governor of the
"world, which was the opinion of Platonists and Arians;
"and in the end to a complete equality with God him-
"self, which is the doctrine of the Athanasian creed, and
"which was not known till the latter end of the fourth
"century." See Universal Theological Magazine, N.S. Vol. III. p. 95. Or, Mr. Belsham's Letters, p. 67.

That the Old Testament should have been pressed to give evidence in favour of the proper deity of Jesus Christ, might not appear very wonderful, when it is

considered how little there is to the point in the New; but when we read the express and positive declarations of Moses and the Prophets, respecting the absolute unity and unrivalled supremacy of Jehovah, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, then it seems almost incredible that any passages should be imagined to teach a doctrine so directly in opposition to those declarations. Cooper, in his Summary above referred to, has collected a few of the latter, and I shall here give his references. *Exod.* xx. 3. *Deut.* iv. 35. 'That thou mightest know that the Lord, HE is God, there is NONE else besides HIM.' iv. 39. v. 7. xxxii. 39. 2 *Sam.* vii. 22. xxii. 32. 1 *Kings* xviii. 39. 2 *Kings* xix. 15. 19. 1 *Chron.* xvii. 20. *Ps.* xviii. 31. lxxxvi. 10. *Isa.* xxxvii. 16. xliv. 6. 8. xlv. 5. "I am the Lord, and there is NONE else; there is NO God besides ME.' xlv. 21, 22. *Hos.* xiii. 4.—See also p. 94; and the *Comparative View.*

Yet there are two or three texts, which, as they stand in the Public Version, do seem to favour the opinion that there is a God besides Jehovah. And though I cannot enter as fully as I should be willing to do, into the consideration of them, it may not be amiss to state what I regard as the true interpretation of them.

The chief passage is *Isa.* ix. 6, which thus stands in the Public Version.—'For unto us a child is born; unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and HIS NAME SHALL BE CALLED, Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God,* The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.' When considering this passage, two things strike me. (1) It is not said respecting the person who *was to be*, that he *would be* what is after-

* Some eminent critics have supposed that אל was not originally in the Hebrew, but this is chiefly upon the authority of the Septuagint. Now it appears to me probable, that the Greek translators had אל though they have rendered it αγγελος, for they have done so in another instance, *Job.* xx. 15. It may add some confirmation to this opinion, by showing a cause for it, that the names of angels commonly had אל for their termination; *e.g.* Gabriel, *my strong God*, or, *strength of God*, Raphael, *healing God*, Samael, *God of desolation*, Zedekiel, Zuriel, Michael, &c.

wards mentioned, but simply that he *would be called* so. Now, though names may be in some sense descriptive, I suppose no one will venture to affirm, that because a person was called, or was to be called, by any name, that therefore he must be what that name literally implies; otherwise ELIHU, *my God himself*, ELIAH, *God Jehovah*, must have been very superior beings to what is usually supposed. (2) That the eastern nations were fond of magnificence and accustomed to magnificent titles, which were not understood literally, nor meant to be so.—And when I examine the original, though I feel no astonishment at the use which has been made of it, yet I perceive nothing which opposes the general tenor of the Old Testament, respecting the absolute unity of God, nor that of the New Testament respecting the absolute unity of God and the proper humanity of Jesus. The words may be taken in several different ways; but that which seems to me the most satisfactory is as follows. 'And his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor of God,' (or, Illustrious Counsellor,)* 'Mighty, Father of the age to come, Prince of Peace.'† That this rendering is fully justified by the original, no one I suppose will deny; and that, at any rate, the Prophet had not the meaning generally affixed to his words, is to me perfectly evident for the following reasons. (1) The very terms, 'a *child is born*,' imply that the person spoken of was not the

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* Agreeably to a well-known employment of the word אל to express eminence. Or, Counselling God, like Raphael, *healing God*.

† The import of this prophetic declaration may, I imagine, be correctly represented as follows. His name shall be called *Wonderful*, for in him and by him the wonderful power and decrees of God will be displayed; *Counsellor of God*, for he will be fully acquainted with the mind and will of God respecting the duty and expectations of mankind; *Mighty*, for by power which God will give him to exercise by himself and his Apostles, he will gradually subdue the world to himself, and by the working of that mighty power, he will be enabled to raise the dead and judge the world; *Father of the age to come*, the head and introducer of a new and everlasting dispensation; *Prince of peace*, the peaceful ruler, under whose laws and influence peace will be diffused on earth as far as his rule is obeyed.

mighty God; though Dr. Watts, following the common rendering of this text, says, "This *infant* is the *mighty God,* come to be *suckled* and adored." (2) The next verse shows that he was not *one being* with *Jehovah,* God of hosts; and the same thing necessarily follows from ch. liii. 6. 10. lxi. 1, &c. (3) In ch. lii. 13, (if, as is here taken for granted, Jesus is the subject of prophecy in both the cases,) the *same* person is called by *Jehovah* the God of Israel, *his servant;* and in liii. 3, *a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.* (4) The book of Isaiah contains several remarkable expressions, which totally exclude any other intelligent agent, except *Jehovah,* from being truly and properly God; for instance (in addition to the passages quoted in p. 410,) ch. xlvi. 9, 'I (that is, *Jehovah,*) *am* God, and *there is* NONE ELSE; I *am* God, and *there is* NONE LIKE ME.'*

Jer. xxiii. 6. 'And this is his name whereby he shall be called, the Lord our Righteousness, or rather, 'Jehovah our Righteousness.' Blayney thus translates the passage, 'And this is the name by which JEHOVAH shall call him, OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.' And this learned critic has the following remark in his Note: "I doubt not but "some persons will be offended with me for depriving "them by this translation of a favourite argument for "proving the divinity of our Saviour from the Old Tes-"tament. But I cannot help it: *I have done it with no "ill design, but purely because I think, and am morally "sure, that the text, as it stands, will not properly "admit of any other construction.* The LXX. have so "translated it before me, in an age when there could not "possibly be any bias of prejudice either for or against "the forementioned doctrine; *a doctrine which draws "its decisive proofs from the New Testament only.* In "the parallel passage, ch. xxxiii. 16, the expression is a "little varied, but the sense according to a just and

* On this text the Author of this volume published a Discourse, delivered on Christmas day 1816; to which the reader may be referred.

"literal translation is precisely the same, 'And this is he "whom JEHOVAH shall call OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.'"*

Zech. ii. 6—13. In these verses, agreeably to the prophetic style, there is a rapid change of persons; and in consequence of the peculiar degree of abruptness, some learned critics have imagined that one 'Jehovah *God* of hosts' was sent by another 'Jehovah *God* of hosts;' that the former must be Christ, and that therefore he must be Jehovah. This singular argument has lately been dwelt upon with much apparent satisfaction by a writer in the Monthly Repository (Vol. II. p. 412,) signing himself Cleric. Dunelm., and supposed to be an author who is by many thought highly of as an interpreter of the *prophecies.* As a counter-argument, I cite *Deut.* xxix. 2—8, (adduced by Gregory Blunt, p. 185,) where, if we neglect an unmarked change of person, we make Moses say to the Israelites, 'I am Jehovah your God.'

Mic. v. 2. 'Whose goings forth *have been* from of old, from everlasting,' or, as Archbishop Newcome renders it, 'from the days of hidden ages.' As these words refer to one who was to come forth at a future time, the natural construction is, 'whose goings forth *have been described* from of old,' &c. At most, the passage could only favour the pre-existence, not the proper deity of Jesus, (if it refer to him;) and *v.* 4. is a proof against the latter. 'He shall stand and feed *his flock,* in the strength of Jehovah, in the majesty of the name of JEHOVAH HIS GOD.

I recollect only two other peculiarities in the Old Testament phraseology, which would generally be supposed to favour the doctrine of a plurality of persons in one God; the one is the plural form of Elohim, the other is the expression in *Gen.* i. 26. 'Let US make man.'—I shall conclude this number with the remarks of Geddes, (who, whatever may be thought of his theology, certainly understood the Hebrew language.) "Do the

* See, however, Mr. Yates's interpretation of this passage, in his *Vindication,* p. 198. It is briefly noticed in the Author's *Comparative View.*

plural forms אלהים and אלהי denote a plurality of persons when applied to the One true God?—No: not any more than אדונים and אדוני denote a plurality of *Lords*, בוראים and בוראי a plurality of *Creators*, פנים and פני a plurality of *faces*, or חיים a plurality of *lives*. It is truly strange that such a notion should ever have been entertained; and indeed it is only a modern notion, of the same age with scholastic theology. The Christian Fathers of the Church, who were eager enough to discover in the Old Testament proofs of a Trinity, never dreamed of seeking one in אלהים."—"The term אלהים is applied not only to the true God, but to false gods, and even to a single false god, whether male or female, such as *Baal, Dagon, Ashtaroth*, &c. It is applied to one angel in *Judges* xiii. 22, and to one man, Moses, *Exod.* iv. 16. and vii. 1. Nay, the golden calf is called by Aaron himself, וחב אלהי god of gold. The plural number then is no proof of a Trinity of Gods or persons; and this is indeed allowed by the best commentators, whether Catholic or Protestant. See Drusius's Diss. on the word אלהים in the 2d Vol. of the Sacred Critics, Part 2, p. 298." Critical Remarks, p. 8.

Respecting the expression, 'Let US make man,' Geddes remarks that some of the Jewish writers, "with whom agree some of our best modern commentators, find in *Let us make*, no more than an emphatical and majestic mode of expression, insinuating both the *power* of the Creator, and the *dignity* of the created." He cites Song of Solomon i. 4. 11. viii. 8, as instances among several others of this poem, in which the plural is used for the singular. "Nor is it peculiar to the Hebrew. It is quite familiar to the Arabs. The Musselmans are certainly no Trinitarians: yet nothing is more common in the Koran than God's speaking in the plural number. *We did—we gave—we commanded.*" Critical Remarks, p. 21.

No. III.

Remarks respecting Mr. Sharp's Canon.

In 1798 Mr. Granville Sharp published his "Remarks on the Uses of the Definite Article in the Greek Testament, containing many new proofs of the Divinity of Christ, from passages which are wrongly translated in the Common English Version." In 1805, the Rev. Calvin Winstanley published his "Vindication of certain passages in the Common English Version of the New Testament;" in which, in my judgment, he completely overturns the critical fabric raised by Mr. Sharp. For reasons which do not appear, Mr. Winstanley withdrew his tract from his publisher, before the spring of 1809; and on that account principally I was led to give, in this Appendix, a view of the leading principles on which I rest my full conviction that Mr. Sharp's renderings are not *required* by the Greek idiom.*

In 1802 Mr. (now Dr.) Wordsworth published his "Six Letters to Granville Sharp," designed to show in what way these passages were understood by the Greek fathers; but the publication seems to add nothing to the merits of the controversy. In reply to the arguments of Sharp and Wordsworth, appeared in 1803 "Six more Letters to Granville Sharp," by a writer of great acuteness and learning, who, under the fictitious name of *Gregory Blunt*, so much indulges a strain of ridicule, that he prevents his arguments from bearing as forcibly as they otherwise would. Mr. Sharp's principle is in some measure maintained in Dr. Middleton's "Doctrine of the Greek Article," 1808, which was reviewed with great talent and learning in the Monthly Review, Vol. lxii. N.S.

Mr. Sharp's Canon is as follows: "When the copulative *και* connects two nouns of the same case

* I have the pleasure of stating that Mr. Winstanley's very able and decisive tract has been republished in America. (3d Ed.)

" [*viz.* nouns (either substantive, or adjective, or partici-
" ples) of personal description respecting office, dignity,
" affinity, or connection, and attributes, properties, or
" qualities good or ill] if the article ὁ, or any of its cases,
" precedes the first of the said nouns or participles, and
" is not repeated before the second noun or participle,
" the latter always relates to the same person that is
" expressed or described by the first noun or participle."
It is admitted on all hands that this is a common usage of the Greek language; the only point is, whether the usage is so universal, that the nouns *must*, in such circumstances, refer to the same person.—I have already shown the *degree* of ambiguity which would arise from the neglect of this usage (see p. 141); and I must say that if instead of being common, the usage had been universal, I should have preferred the supposition that the Apostle had made a minute grammatical error, than that he contradicted himself, (compare p. 41). But if it not only can be shown that the usage is not universal, but that there was a propriety in the departure from it in the cases referred to, even the grammatical part of the argument must then be given up as futile. As to the latter point, see p. 142, *note;* with respect to the former, I shall subjoin a few remarks chiefly derived from Middleton, Blunt, and Winstanley.

1. *The cases corresponding in construction to those of the Canon, but not included in it, show that there is nothing in the construction itself which requires the inference stated in the Canon.* Ὁ λιθος και χρυσος, and την απειριαν και απαιδευσιαν, have exactly the construction required by the Canon; but this construction does not identify the objects.* Names of different substances, and of different abstract qualities, are *obviously* inapplicable to the *same* substance or quality; and *therefore* the construction is of no force.

2. *The* exceptions *admitted by Mr. Sharp to his Canon, also show that there is nothing in the construction itself which requires the inference.* " There is no

* Middleton's Doctrine of the Greek Article, p. 83.

"exception or instance of the like mode of expression "that I know of," says Mr. Sharp, "which necessarily "requires a construction different from what is here laid "down, except the nouns be *proper names*, or *in the* "*plural number*." When we read τον Αλεξανδρον και Φιλιππον, we see at once that they must be names of different individuals, and *therefore* the construction is of no force. In like manner we readily perceive that τους τραγῳδους τε και κωμῳδους, do not refer to the same classes of men, and *therefore* the construction is of no force.—It is well observed by Middleton,* (as the reason why the inference of identity is less general in the case of *plural* than of *singular* nouns,) that "though *one* "individual may act, and frequently does act in several "capacities, it is not likely that a *multitude* of indivi- "duals should all of them act in the *same* several capa- "cities, and that, "by the *extreme improbability, that* "*they should be represented as so acting*, we may be "forbidden to understand the second plural attributive of "the persons designed in the article prefixed to the first, "*however the usage in the singular might seem to* "*countenance the construction*." I need not remind the reader how appropriate this remark is to the passage where Paul is supposed to call *Jesus Christ* the GREAT GOD. See p. 41. 140.

3. *The* exceptions *added by Winstanley,*† *and by Middleton,* (in connexion with those allowed by Sharp, fairly considered,) *must be fatal to the inference deduced from the construction.* (1) *National appellations must be excepted;* as, Ὁ Μωαβιτης και Αμανιτης. (2) *The inference will not hold good where one of the nouns is plural;* as, Συν τῃ μητρι και δουλοις. (3) Nor *if one of them is a proper name;* as, Οἱ πιστοι εικονα εχουσι του αρχοντος Θεου πατρος και Ιησου Χριστου. (4) Nor *if the attributives "cannot be predicated of the same subject without the most evident and direct contradiction;"* as, Του αρτιου και περιττου, του δικαιου και αδικου.‡ (5) Nor even *if the signification of the personal words*

* Middleton, p. 90. † Vindication, p. 16. ‡ Middleton, p. 92.

render any further mark of personal distinction unnecessary; as, Του πεπαιδευμενου και απαιδευτου, and Μεταξυ του ποιουντος τε και πασχοντος.—With the 4th class of exceptions I would rank one of the passages which Mr. Sharp regards as proofs of the Godhead of Jesus. I contend that no early convert who had been taught Christianity by Paul, or who had even only read his Epistles, could suppose that he meant the same person by THE GREAT GOD, and, OUR SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST. Allowing the Apostle to be his own interpreter, I feel no hesitation in saying, that he could not have called *Jesus Christ* the GREAT God, "without the most evident and direct contradiction." In like manner, I would rank the other passages adduced by Mr. Sharp, (see p. 138,) with the 5th class of exceptions. In the Apostle Paul's phraseology *God*, and, *Christ*, (or *the Lord Jesus Christ*,) were as perfectly distinct appellations, as *Philip* and *Alexander* in the phraseology of the Greek orators.

4. *In a very large proportion of the instances adduced, in which any inference can be drawn as to the identity of the object of the personal nouns, it is drawn not from the construction, but from the meaning of the words themselves, or from some adjunct which indicates the intention of the writer.** I believe it would not be too much to say that this is so generally the case, as (in connexion with the foregoing remarks) to justify the conclusion that *the peculiarity of construction specified in Mr. Sharp's rule, was not in any way* appropriate *to the inference he has drawn from it.* I shall adduce two or three instances in explanation of my meaning; with a full expectation that the critical reader will find the statement of very general application. In ὁ περιεργος και συκοφαντης Δημοσθενης, the last noun shows that the two former refer to the same person: and in τις ὁ τη πολει λεγων και γραφων και πραττων και ἑαυτον δους, the τις shows that the following participles refer to the same person. In the following passage, quoted by Middleton

* See some excellent remarks which suggested this, in Gregory Blunt, p. 59.

from Philo, it appears evident that the *insufficiency* of the *construction* to *decide* the *identity* of object was felt by that writer; after saying, Εξεπεμπε προς τον της Ιουδαιας αρχιερεα και βασιλεα, he adds, ὁ γαρ αυτος ην.

5. But whatever objection may be made to the force of the foregoing remarks, *it is sufficient to show the futility of Mr. Sharp's inference in reference to the deity of Christ, if we can produce one clear instance in which the construction has been preserved, while the nouns refer to different persons:* if the inference be not a necessary one, it can weigh nothing against such evidence as we possess, that the Apostle Paul meant two persons by the appellations *the Great God,* and *our Saviour Jesus Christ.* Now several unexceptionable instances have been produced; and they completely destroy the authority of the Canon. The first I shall mention is from Dr. Middleton, p. 91. Herodotus, he says, (Ed. Steph. lib. iv. p. 154,) has these words: Των παλλακεων τε μιην αποκνιξαντες ϑαπτουσι, και τον οινοχοον, και μαγειρον, και ἱπποκομον, και διηκονον, και αγγελληφορον, και ἱππους, και κ. τ. λ. A second is adduced by Gregory Blunt (p. 57), from Wordsworth's Letters, (p. 51), taken from Chrysostom's homily on 1 *Tim.* v. 21; "where that Father clearly understands the words ενωπιον του Θεου και κυριου ἡμων Ιησου, of two different persons, the Father and the Son: and he is followed in that explanation, as usual, by Œcumenius and Theophylact." Mr. Winstanley has brought forward several others, all of which are appropriate, and two of them in every respect unexceptionable: Μεθ' οὐ δοξα τῳ ϑεῳ και πατρι και ἁγιῳ πνευματι, *Epist. Eccles. Smyrn. de Martyr. Polycarp.*: Φοβου τον ϑεον, υἱε, και βασιλεα, και μηθ' ἑτερῳ αυτων απειθησης, Parœm. xxiv. 21; which passage from the Septuagint is thus quoted, says Winstanley, in the interpolated epistle of Ignatius to the Smyrnians, Τιμα, φησιν, υἱε, τον ϑεον και βασιλεα.

The real state of the case is, that *the construction specified in the Canon,* (*viz.* with the article before the first of two or more nouns connected by και,) usually, if

not universally, *marks a close connexion between the things or persons signified,* or, *their common dependence on what is denoted by the governing word;* but *it does nothing more:* the *nature* of that connexion or dependence is a mere matter of inference. Even in the very limited class to which Mr. Sharp applies his Canon, it decides nothing respecting the identity of person, but merely their joint and common reference or dependence; as appears from the facts already adduced.*

In the "Defence of the Preservative," p. 100—105, Mr. Veysie follows Granville Sharp, in his renderings of *Tit.* ii. 13, and *Eph.* v. 5; and he maintains that with the exception of the passages in dispute there is no instance in "which a different rendering was even thought of for words of the same kind, and in the same form." In fact the Canon is so limited by its numberless exceptions, that it is capable of application to very few others: and the error of the Canon consists in this, that it assumes itself to be the general principle, when it only respects one small class of words connected by a construction common to several classes; while the construction is founded on a more general principle comprehending all the classes, and explaining the phenomena in the class referred to, without any departure from the strictest rules of interpretation. Indeed Mr. Veysie himself perceived that general principle, though not the application of it. In his Dissertation on the Greek Prepostive Article, (Oxford 1810,) he says, "it is to be observed that proper names, "(τον Αλεξανδρον και Φιλιππον,) and the common names "of substances, can then only be combined *when there* "*is some common principle of union, on account of* "*which the things signified by these names may be* "*brought together, and as it were identified.* Thus "Alexander and Philip, though two distinct persons, yet "considered as the enemy of the Athenian state, *were* "*but as one.*" When before (p. 32) considering the passage from Æschines (contr. Ctes. §. 81), in which

* I cannot find any reference to the construction in Blomfield's Translation of Matthiæ's Greek Grammar.

the above phrase occurs, Mr. Veysie remarks, "These "are homogeneous, being persons: they are also to one "another in the relation of son and father; and had "acted together in concert against the Athenians; and "were known to the Athenians as having so acted, and "therefore the Orator might justly couple their names, "and make them subject to the power of the same "articles. Since Philip is combined with Alexander, it "serves to show that the Orator is now speaking of the "same Alexander and Philip whom he had before men-"tioned together, and whose coalition and in some sense "*unity*, was well known and acknowledged."

I need scarcely say how completely these remarks are applicable to the passages from the Scriptures to which Mr. Veysie refers. Indeed I find the general principle itself so broadly stated in the preceding page, that I cannot but feel surprised that any man of sound learning and correct judgment, as Mr. Veysie obviously was, could hesitate in applying it to the cases with which Mr. Sharp's Canon embarrasses the critic. The form in question, he observes, (*viz.* when two words connected by the copulative conjunction have the article prefixed only to the former,) "can then only take place, "when the things denoted by the words are homoge-"neous, or in some way related, or at least so far com-"patible as to admit their being brought together, and "as it were consolidated:" and conversely we may add, the construction shows no more than that the things or qualities denoted are so far related or compatible.

After again pursuing this investigation, I conclude, with the fullest conviction, that the construction simply marks *unity of* RELATION, or, *joint connexion;* and that it in no way implies *identity of* PERSON, which, if real, is a matter of inference, derived from other considerations.

No. IV.

On the Epistle to the Hebrews.

I THINK it desirable to add here a statement of my views respecting this Epistle; and in particular of the reasons why I cannot regard it as written by the Apostle Paul.

It is to my mind certain that the Epistle was written to the Hebrew Christians of Palæstine, and not long before the commencement of the final Jewish war,—when the state of the country was exciting all the wild passions of the unbelieving Jews, and when the storm of their bitter hatred was ready to pour down, with unrestrained violence, upon those who, as they thought, deserted the religion of their forefathers. Nothing can be more clear from the internal evidence, that it was written *before* the destruction of Jerusalem; but it cannot with probability be placed much before the final war. The representations of the Author as to the spread of apostacy among the Hebrews, imply a state of things which could scarcely have come on within two years after Paul's pleading before Agrippa. Following merely internal evidence, I should place it after the year 64, when, probably, St. Paul suffered martyrdom at Rome;—perhaps even so late as A.D. 66. On this, however, I would not be understood to lay any great stress.

If written to the Hebrew Christians of Palæstine, nothing but clear and decisive evidence to the contrary, should lead one from the opinion that it was written in the then language of Palæstine—the Syro-Chaldaic. It must have been written by a Hebrew; and when writing to Hebrews, it is inconceivable that he should write in a language which would be unintelligible to a large proportion of those to whom it was addressed. Paul wrote, indeed, to the Roman Christians in Greek; but Greek was his own native language, and was familiarly known by the Jews out of Judæa, who employed it in their synagogues, and, from their commercial habits, would

be peculiarly likely to be acquainted with it. The early converts to Christianity were, every where, principally from the Jews; and to these the language of the Septuagint must be known from childhood. The Jews of Palæstine did not use the Septuagint. The Hebrews always kept distinct from the Hellenists.

So far from there being any decisive evidence to the contrary, the whole current of ancient evidence favours the belief that this Epistle was written in the Hebrew of that age. And whoever receives it as St. Paul's, can with no consistency maintain it to have been first written in Greek.—Paul was truly eloquent; but his glowing energetic eloquence is as dissimilar to the more beautiful, but more artificial eloquence of the Writer to the Hebrews, as that of Demosthenes is to Cicero's. This indeed rather respects the modes of thought; but the choice of words and mode of expression also widely differ, and the Epistle to the Hebrews possesses an elegance and polish, which the ardent mind of the Apostle could not have stopped to produce. This fact was strongly felt by those who, from their vernacular language, were most competent to judge; and few modern critics of cultivated taste have been without the perception of it, even though they still supposed the Epistle to have been written by St. Paul in Greek. The arguments adduced in support of their supposition, have been sufficiently considered by Michaelis; and though I cannot accord with all his reasonings, I am satisfied that there is no internal evidence which is at all adequate to overturn the undoubting opinion of the best ancient authorities, that the Epistle in its present state is a translation.

But who was the Author? There can be no doubt that he was 'an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures;' and that he was well skilled in the Jewish modes of arguing from them. There can be no doubt, further, that he was one to whom the Hebrew Christians were accustomed to look with respect: he writes as one well-known, and having authority.—If we were unacquainted with the opinions of the ancients on the subject, and were left to judge solely by internal evidence, I should say that

the Author of the Epistle was well acquainted with the writings of St. Paul, and not improbably was versed in those of Philo also. That he had much of the spirit of the Apostle, derived from the same common fountain, I should readily admit; and also that his work is one of great interest and value, and in various parts fitted to bind the Gospel to the heart, and to make it influence the life: but I could go no further. His style of argument is powerfully persuasive, his eloquence sometimes brilliant and even noble, and his practical representations well fitted to stimulate and to encourage: but we never see him carried away by that ardent energy of mind which, in the Apostle's case, seems to set at defiance all the usual trammels of composition; we do not perceive "the thoughts that breathe and the words that burn," nor the great conceptions labouring for utterance, which so often bear up even the sluggish imagination on the wings of faith, towards the 'light inaccessible and full of glory.' Take the most eloquent part of the Epistle, the chapter on faith, where the Author was least fettered by his peculiar object,—notwithstanding the occasional sublimity of his composition, its general beauty is so methodical and regularly sustained, that I can find no corresponding portion throughout the thirteen epistles of Paul, though there are many which are made to surpass it by the great thoughts which habitually filled the Apostle's mind. The Epistle to the Hebrews throughout bears the character of a *studied* composition.

But one thing strikes me more forcibly still; and it is less dependent on taste and criticism than the foregoing. The imagination of the unknown Author was, obviously, very strongly impressed with the ritual and ceremonial of the Jews. He writes like one labouring to convince himself as well as others, that the simplicity that is in Christ is far better, and that it was time these things should come to an end. He did indeed perceive the insufficiency of the Mosaic ritual in itself considered; but all his habits and associations had been formed under it, and had been always fostered by it; and he could not himself rest without something to fill up the void which

his imagination experienced, when it contemplated all that once struck and captivated it as soon to be for ever annihilated. He felt as one who had continued within the impressions of the imposing splendour of the Jewish rites and ceremonies; and he wrote to those who felt the same,—'all zealous for the Law.'—The Apostle, on the other hand, had long been free from such influences; and his mind continually dwelling on the grand all-comprehensive principles of the gospel dispensation, even in his earlier writings, could only look upon those things which had now done all their service as "weak and beggarly elements." The unknown Author, a Hebrew writing to Hebrews, and personally knowing their feelings and difficulties, seems to think of nothing but his countrymen: the Apostle knew in Christ neither Jew nor Greek, neither circumcision nor uncircumcision. He earnestly desired for his kinsmen according to the flesh, that they might be saved; and he would have given his life to effect this: but if I understand the character of his mind, had he seen fit to write to the Hebrew Christians, he would have given the whole argument of the first ten chapters in a few authoritative declarations; and he certainly would have impressed on their minds that CHRIST *died for* ALL, that HIS system embraced all mankind, and that all were now brethren under one head. In enabling them to discern the conclusion to which the unknown Author conducts them, the Apostle would have raised them high enough to see all the world, and to perceive at once the infinite superiority of the Christian dispensation. Considering the style and substance of the recently written Epistles to the Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians, I do not think the Apostle of the Gentiles could have pursued in detail the systematic argument of the Writer to the Hebrews; still less that he could have left out of view those great principles for which he had been an ambassador in bonds.

In a case where there is so great a deficiency of external evidence, I might lay much stress on the complete difference between the commencement of the Epistle, and that of the acknowledged writings of Paul; to account

for which I have seen no adequate hypothesis: and still more on the Apostle's concealment of his name, (supposing him the Author,) though writing as one well-known. That there are some things which suit the circumstances of the Apostle, I admit: the Writer speaks (ch. xiii. 23) of Timothy as his brother, which the Apostle might do; and the Hebrew Christians must have had compassion on the Apostle in his bonds: but of themselves these things prove nothing. In the last passage (ch. x. 34), the original reading was probably *τοις δεσμιοις, on those in bonds*, and not *τοις δεσμοις μου, on my bonds*, according to the present text; and even if otherwise, it in no way exclusively accords with the Apostle's case. As to the former passage, I think it against the opinion that St. Paul wrote the Epistle soon after his own liberation; we have no reason to believe that Timothy was imprisoned during it. On the other hand, several things, independently of the style and language and the general train of thought, have often struck me as not well according with that opinion; but they are usually too minute to lay any stress upon them separately. One passage, however, I must mention, since often adduced on the other side, *viz.* ch. xiii. 18, 19, and 23. I can hardly think that the Apostle, after his long imprisonment, and such ardent but dignified declarations respecting his principles and conduct, as we find in his other Epistles, would have satisfied himself with the simple expression, 'for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honourably;' and still less can I suppose that the Apostle would calculate on going again into Judæa, and even purpose to do it. I know these things are easily made to appear in a different light; and I wish to be understood as laying no stress upon them. All I maintain is, that there is nothing in the internal evidence to fix it to the Apostle; and in my judgment strong reasons against the supposition. I should be compelled by them to doubt, even if the external evidence were much less defective.

Of the Thirteen Epistles of St. Paul, we may truly say that no doubt of their genuineness were ever enter-

tained from the earliest period of the Christian church. The historic testimony is as strong as it can be; and Paley has admirably shown, in his *Horæ Paulinæ*, that, even independent of this, we have abundant reason to ascribe them to one author, and that one, the person whose history forms a principal portion of the book of Acts.—Paley does not attempt to apply his reasoning to the Epistle to the Hebrews, and I am not aware how it can be applied.

The great deficiency of external evidence will appear from the following statements, founded on Lardner's induction; from which, however, Lardner himself comes to a different conclusion.*

Clemens Romanus who wrote at the close of the first century, has sentiments and modes of expression so strikingly accordant with those of the Epistle to the Hebrews, that it is nearly certain he was acquainted with it. Eusebius was of opinion (but it seems without reason) that Clemens translated the Epistle into Greek.—We have no ground to suppose that Clement attributed the Epistle to St. Paul; and as Lardner observes (*Works* vi. 395), "If the church of Rome, in his time, had owned it for an Epistle of Paul, it is not easy to conceive how any Latin Christians afterwards should have rejected it, or doubted of its authority." I see no room to hesitate in believing that the church of Rome never received it as St. Paul's during the earliest ages; and if

* In the History of Apostles and Evangelists, (the Supplement to the Credibility,) Lardner seems decidedly in favour of the opinion that the Epistle was composed by St. Paul. His conjecture is (*Works* vi. 410), "that St. Paul dictated the Epistle in Hebrew, "and another, who was a great master of the Greek language, "immediately wrote down the Apostle's sentiments in his own "elegant Greek." Lardner thinks this not much different from Origen's opinion: but to me it appears quite the contrary; and to have no solid foundation either in testimony or in the nature of the case.—In the preceding part of his Credibility (*Works* ii. 476), when remarking on Mr. Hallett's exaggerated representations of the evidence for the common opinion, he seems to have had a strong feeling against it; and goes so far as to say, "These things, if I mis-"take not, are sufficient to make us think that the tradition, that the "Epistle to the Hebrews is Paul's, is not of the utmost antiquity; or "that, if it is, it must have lain for some time in a very few hands."

he had written it either in Rome, or near it, (as those who attribute it to him very generally represent,) surely there would have been a constant tradition among the Roman Christians that such an Epistle had been written by him to the Hebrews, which would have led to attribute it to him whenever any copies reached them.

Irenæus, Bishop of Lyons, flourished in the latter part of the second century: he wrote in Greek, was early acquainted with Polycarp, and probably came from Asia. Irenæus was obviously acquainted with the Epistle; but it is decidedly probable that he did not regard it as the production of St. Paul. (See Lardner's *Works*, Vol. ii. p. 165, 166.) Lardner, indeed, infers no more than that Irenæus "was not fully satisfied it was Paul's;" but I think the evidence he adduces authorizes the conviction, that Irenæus did not receive the Epistle as a work of apostolical authority. We know that his disciple Hippolytus did not.

Clemens Alexandrinus, at the close of the second century, expressly ascribes the Epistle to Paul. He says that it was written in Hebrew, and translated into Greek by Luke. To account for the want of the Apostle's name, he says, in one place, that he omitted it because the Hebrews had conceived a prejudice against him; and, in another, (following the representations of "the blessed presbyter," Pantænus,) because Christ was sent as an Apostle to the Hebrews, and Paul only to the Gentiles: of which reasons we can judge as well as Clement, and cannot but perceive their extreme futility. The general current of opinion in the Church at Alexandria, followed that of Clement. Dionysius (A.D. 274), Theognostus (282), Alexander (313), and Peter (354), all of Alexandria, are known to have received the Epistle as Paul's. Cosmas (535) states that it "was written in Hebrew, and translated into Greek, as is said, by Luke or Clement." Origen, however, seems to have felt great uncertainty, as we shall soon perceive.

Tertullian, of Carthage, who was contemporary with Clemens Alexandrinus but continued after him, is equally decided on the other side. He received Thirteen Epistles

as written by St. Paul:* but the Epistle to the Hebrews he attributes without hesitation to Barnabas, and does not appear to have known that any attributed it to Paul. Though the sentiments of the Epistle were very favourable to the opinions he once held, he did not even then consider it as of apostolical authority.

Caius, a Presbyter of Rome, but who wrote in Greek, placed by Lardner about the year 212, is the next testimony. From the account of Eusebius and others, it is certain that he did not ascribe this Epistle to St. Paul. In reply to some statements of the heretics, he enumerated only the Thirteen Epistles; and he does not seem to have been aware that this was ever attributed to him.

Origen, the eminent Catechist of Alexandria, is placed by Lardner in A.D. 230. He was a man of singular learning, talents, and virtue, and to use the words of Lardner, he was "one of those rare personages that have done honour to the human nature." Having been a catechumen of Clement, it might be expected that he would follow his opinion as to the Author of the Epistle. He refers to the testimony of "men of former times" on the subject; but these may have been only Clement, and the Presbyter to whom Clement himself referred. He argues from the admirable sentiments of the Epistle, that

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* "We have now seen," says Lardner, "a very valuable testimony to the Scriptures of the New Testament, in the remaining works of Tertullian, written in the latter part of the second, and the beginning of the third, century. It is considerable for the number of books cited by him,—almost all those which are now received by Christians as canonical,—without so much as a suspicion of placing any other in the same rank with them; and for the large and numerous quotations from them. *There are perhaps more and larger quotations of the small volume of the New Testament in this one Christian author, than of all the works of Cicero, though of so uncommon excellence for thought and style, in the writers of all characters for several ages.* And there is a like number of quotations of the New Testament in St. Irenæus, and St. Clement of Alexandria, both writers of the second century. Tertullian's testimony is considerable too for the evident tokens of that high respect which was paid to these Scriptures. Indeed they would not have been so much quoted, if they had not been greatly esteemed." Lardner's *Works*, Vol. II. p. 287.

they are the Apostle's; but from the style, that it was not written by him; and his theory on the subject is, that some one committed to writing the Apostle's sentiments, using his own language and style of composition. "If therefore (continues Origen, as quoted by Eusebius,) any Church receives this Epistle as Paul's, it is to be commended even on that account: for it is not without reason that ancient men have handed it down as Paul's: but who wrote this Epistle, God only knows certainly. Ου γαρ εικη οἱ αρχαιοι ανδρες ὡς Παυλου αυτην παραδεδωκασι. τις δε ὁ γραψας την επιστολην, το μεν αληθες Θεος οιδεν. But the account come down to us is various; some saying that Clement who was Bishop of Rome, wrote this Epistle; others, that it was Luke, who wrote the Gospel and the Acts." The expression οἱ αρχαιοι ανδρες, *ancient men*, is often quoted as though it denoted *the ancients in general* who preceded Origen: but this is out of the question; Origen was too well informed to have intended this. That it was the production of the Apostle Paul, could not have been a general and prevailing opinion in the first two centuries; otherwise such men as Irenæus, Tertullian, and Caius could not have been ignorant of it, or uninfluenced by it.

On the whole, Origen, though he well knew the unhesitating opinion of his master Clemens Alexandrinus, and obviously had no bias whatever against the Epistle, and though he must have been in possession of all the evidence which we can hope ever to possess, goes no further than to ascribe the *sentiments* to the Apostle; and this, not as *dictated* by him, or in any sense *addressed* to the Hebrews, but as the recollections of one who had heard the instructions of the Apostle, and as it were wrote memoranda of them. Εγω δε αποφαινομενος ειποιμ' αν, ὁτι τα μεν νοηματα του αποστολου εστιν. ἡ δε φρασις, και ἡ συνθεσις, απομνημονευσαντος τινος τα αποστολικα, και ὡσπερει σχολιογραφησαντος τα ειρημενα.*

* Euseb. Eccl. Hist. Lib. vi. c. 25. Eusebius is here giving an extract from Origen's Homilies on the Epistle.—This quotation immediately precedes that which was before given.

—When therefore he expresses (as above) his utter uncertainty who *wrote* the Epistle, it is obvious that he does not mean merely as a *scribe* or *amanuensis*, but as an *author*, who, though not the Apostle himself, was thoroughly imbued with his sentiments. And to this extent, and this only, did Origen ascribe the Epistle to St. Paul: and I know no *evidence* which can carry the matter nearer to the now almost universal opinion. Nothing which comes *after* Origen can, I think, justify it.

In the East, it appears to have been pretty generally received even in the time of Origen; but it was certainly rejected by some. Julius Africanus (A.D. 220), who resided in Palæstine and was a man of eminence and learning, wrote a critical letter to Origen against the authenticity of the history of Susanna, to which Origen had appealed in his presence. In reply, Origen argues the matter at length; and refers, in a collateral proof, to the Epistle to the Hebrews. "But probably" he continues "some one, pressed by this argument, may avail "himself of the opinion of those who reject this Epistle, "as not written by Paul: for whom we require a sepa-"rate discussion to show that it is Paul's."*—It is obvious that the opinion of these persons is treated with great gentleness: and one may reasonably imagine that Origen considered his correspondent as probably disposed to adopt it. At any rate, he must have regarded it as far from unknown in the East. Indeed *Hippolytus* an eminent ecclesiastical writer in the Greek language, who is said to have had Origen among his auditors, decidedly rejected it.

In the West, the general current of opinion long continued to be against the apostolical authority of the Epistle. Neither *Novatus* in Rome (A.D. 251), nor *Cyprian* of Carthage (248) who opposed him, received it as Paul's. This is the more extraordinary in respect to Novatus, since the Epistle affords some countenance to

* To what extent he regarded it as St. Paul's, may be ascertained from what Eusebius gives as his deliberate judgment, and which I have already cited.

his peculiar dogmas; and so far as A.D. 380, it was customary in some places to omit the public reading of the Epistle on account of the Novatians.—The *Council of Carthage,* near the close of the fourth century, makes such a distinction between this Epistle and the other Thirteen, as leads to suppose that it was, even then, less generally received.—*Augustine,* Bishop of Hippo Regius in Numidia, who flourished at the close of the fourth century and in the first part of the fifth, though in his earliest writings he appears to have received the Epistle without hesitation, yet afterwards writes with more indecision, and obviously impressed by the opinion of those who regard it as of doubtful authority; nevertheless he says he is more influenced by the authority of the eastern churches, who receive it in their canon.

The eminent ecclesiastical historian *Eusebius,* Bishop of Cæsarea (A.D. 315), himself received the Epistle, and obviously regarded it as generally received, except by the Roman church. And in like manner *Jerome* (A.D. 380), who had singular opportunities of becoming acquainted with the state of the Christian world, represents it as universally received by the Greeks, but even then not in general received by the Christians who used the Latin language. Jerome himself appears at times to have felt some uncertainty; but the latter part of his life he spent in the East; and he was finally decided by the opinion of the Greek ecclesiastical writers, and received it as St. Paul's. His opinion probably decided others; for after the fourth century, we hear no more of any doubt on the subject. But I am not aware that this at all affects the question. Lower than the time of Origen, *testimony* is of little moment; and of the internal evidence we have, (in possession of the opinions of the ancients,) even better means of judgment than those who follow him.

On the whole, the state of the case is as follows. An Epistle of great value,—bearing the impress of a cultivated and polished intellect, great skill in composition, refined and glowing eloquence, and intimate acquaintance with the Jewish Scriptures, united with earnest zeal for

the Gospel, enlarged and impressive views of Christian faith and obligations, elevated ideas respecting the character and dignity of Christ himself, and ennobling piety towards that Great Being who made him the Author of an eternal salvation to all who obey him,—and obviously written before the destruction of Jerusalem, and by a person of eminence and credit in the Christian church in Judæa,—has, through the providence of God, been preserved to the present times, as a memorial of the sentiments of the Hebrew Christians in those days, and to cherish Christian principle, and faithful obedience to the divine will, in all succeeding times.

Though we possess it only in Greek, yet the reason of the thing, and the general tradition of the most ancient testimonies, render it almost certain that it was originally sent to the Hebrew Christians in the common language of Judæa.—The Author might himself have written it also in Greek, for the benefit of the Hellenists residing in Judæa; but there must have been a Hebrew original.

Not only is there an absence of the usual modes of address and salutation, but there is nothing in any part of the Epistle to fix it to any known individual: and the actual circumstances of those for whom it was intended, their subsequent dispersion, and the complete annihilation, for a time, of the Christian churches in Judæa, must have prevented that speedy multiplication of copies, which took place in reference to most of the other books of the New Testament, and which would have excited early attention to this among the Gentile Christians, and connected with the Epistle itself that conviction respecting the Author of it which would have prevented all future uncertainty.

In the present times, the very general belief is, that it was written by the Apostle Paul: but the early Christian Writers manifested great uncertainty and variety of opinion on the subject.

If the present Greek proceeded directly from the Author of the Epistle, then we are quite certain that this was not the Apostle Paul: it could not have been written or dictated by him in its present form.

If the present Epistle be in any strict sense a translation, the diversity in style may be accounted for; but besides this, there is a very considerable difference in the modes of thought and even of reasoning, which, in my judgment, renders it almost impossible that it should have proceeded from the Apostle, at the age and in the circumstances to which, if he were the Author, we must refer it.

The almost uninterrupted conviction of the Latin churches, during the first two centuries after the period of the Epistle, appears to have been, that it was not written by the Apostle Paul: and as Rome was the resort of the world in those days, as many Jews resided there, and the Christians of that church must have had peculiar opportunities for information on the subject, the ascertained opinion of the church of Rome is very weighty.

The Christians of Alexandria, on the other hand, appear to have early formed the conviction that the Epistle was written by St. Paul, and translated into Greek by some other eminent person: and the influence of the Alexandrian church probably extended this opinion among the churches of Asia. Nevertheless Origen, who had perhaps beyond all others the means of knowing the truth, merely attributes the *sentiments* to the Apostle, as in some sense their *source*, (and this solely from internal evidence;) while he declares his utter ignorance who was the Author of the Epistle.

In the absence of adequate external evidence, conjecture is allowable. I infer from the character of the Epistle itself, that the Author of it was versed in the writings of Philo, as well as in the instructions of Paul; and among the eminent Christians of the first age, whose names are recorded in the New Testament, I am disposed (with Luther) to fix upon Apollos as the Author.* It certainly is not dishonourable to the Epistle, to attribute it to

* Beausobre (quoted by Lardner, *Works* iv. 270) entertained the same opinion. "The more I read Philo, the more I suspect that "Apollos might have written this Epistle. For certainly we find in "it many thoughts and sentiments taken from Philo, whose disciple "apparently Apollos had been, as he was a Jew of Alexandria."

the Gospel, enlarged and impressive views of Christian faith and obligations, elevated ideas respecting the character and dignity of Christ himself, and ennobling piety towards that Great Being who made him the Author of an eternal salvation to all who obey him,—and obviously written before the destruction of Jerusalem, and by a person of eminence and credit in the Christian church in Judæa,—has, through the providence of God, been preserved to the present times, as a memorial of the sentiments of the Hebrew Christians in those days, and to cherish Christian principle, and faithful obedience to the divine will, in all succeeding times.

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ERRATA.

Page 3, *(Note) John* x. 33.
.... 44, *(Note) Rom.* v. 15.
.... 80, *(Note)* 1 *John* v. 13.
.... 88, *(at bottom)* HEB. A.D. 65 or 66. Before this Epistle should have been a *double* rule.
.... 108, l. 7, SON OF MAN,' that is, *a proper human being.*—*Ver.* 30. ' I CAN
.... 138, *(Citation)* 2 *Thess.* i. 12. " According to the grace of our God and Lord, Jesus Christ."
.... 142, l. 7, spuriousness of the passage in Italics.
.... 146, *(Note)* In *Isa.* viii. 10.
.... 168, l. 11, *(from bottom)* the word of God.
.... 175, l. 6, Ὁραατος means either *seen* or *visible.*
.... 188, l. 6, *(from bottom)* first Epistle, ch. v. 1.
.... 240, l. 1, Bull, " the Churches
.... 247, l. 6, *(of Note)* επ' αυτους
.... 252 *(at bottom) dele* See Appendix, No. IV.
.... 262, l. 2, 1 *Pet.* iv. 6.
.... 273, (*Citation*) *John* viii. 58.
.... 277, l. 3, *dele* or, *and read in* l. 4, or have.
.... 293, l. 8, *dele* * before 27.

N.B. In the above list, I have omitted some typographical errata, and several in the references, (discovered for me in a minute and careful revision,) which seemed not likely to give the Reader any trouble. Several of the latter class arise from the variations in the position of the verse-numbers, in those editions of the Greek Testament which are not separated into verses.

one who was 'an eloquent man and mighty in the Scriptures.'

But whatever become of this conjecture, repeated and careful examination of the question fully satisfies me in the conclusion, that however much the sentiments of the Epistle may be traced to the Apostle Paul, he was in no strict sense the Author of it; and that, valuable and interesting as it is, it does not possess direct apostolical authority.

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